AW
EST. 1945
ATHLETICSWEEKLY.COM
MARCH 2023 | £5.95

THE MIND ISSUE

THE SCIENTIST
THE COACH WHO IS REBUILDING THE HOPES OF BRITAIN'S TOP SPRINTERS

STOP TRYING TO WIN
ADVICE FROM A TOP SPORTS PSYCHOLOGIST

OLDER, SLOWER, BETTER
THE MASTERS ATHLETES WHO CONTINUE TO PUSH THEMSELVES

HOW FINDING HAPPINESS LED TO A GOLDEN MOMENT FOR **JAZMIN SAWYERS**

LEAP OF FAITH

+ **ISTANBUL 2023** THE BIG TALKING POINTS FROM THE EUROPEAN INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIPS

VISIT…

LANZAROTE Caliente.COM

CARBON PLATED
RACE-DAY SHOES

MIZUNO WAVE REBELLION PRO

An epitome of innovation combining high stack, lightweight cushioning and a carbon-infused nylon wave plate.

PUMA DEVIATE NITRO ELITE 2

Pinnacle responsiveness, propulsion, and cushioning in an extremely lightweight package built for your next marathon

ADIDAS ADIZERO ADIOS PRO 3

Made for speed with carbon-infused ENERGYRODS that provide lightweight stiffness for a snappy, efficient stride.

SAUCONY ENDORPHIN PRO 3

Signature carbon-fibre plate and thick stack of PWRRUNPB foam that creates more speed and pop underfoot

START FITNESS

FREE SOCKS WITH ALL FOOTWEAR PURCHASES

STARTFITNESSUK STARTFITNESS_UK STARTFITNESS START FITNESS RUNNING CLUB

NEW 2023

TRACK & FIELD SPIKES

ADIZERO PRIME SP 2

A sprint super spike made with a carbon and nylon spike plate that delivers ultralight stiffness.

TOKYO FUTURE 4

Lightweight and responsive sprint spike, with a carbon fibre plate for enhanced propulsion.

ADIZERO AMBITION

Featuring Lightstrike Pro and tuned for speed with mid-distance in mind.

DISTANCE NITRO ELITE +

Features a full-length carbon fibre plate and lightweight, nitrogen-injected foam midsole.

START FITNESS | *SHOP OUR FULL COLLECTION*

STARTFITNESSUK *STARTFITNESS_UK* *STARTFITNESS* *START FITNESS RUNNING CLUB*

AW
AW EST. 1945 ATHLETICSWEEKLY.COM
BIG NOISE
THREE-TIME WORLD CHAMPION NOAH LYLES WANTS TO RAISE HIS PROFILE AND DRAG ATHLETICS INTO THE FUTURE
A FEW OF OUR FAVOURITE THINGS
WHAT WE LOVE ABOUT ATHLETICS
THE MIND
"I like to think that I can cause a bit of damage"
KEELY
EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH BRITAIN'S 800M SUPERSTAR
NEERAJ CHOPRA BECOMING ATHLETICS' MAN OF THE MOMENT
WORLD CROSS PREVIEW
View previous editions of the Athletics Weekly Newsletter
Latest
Results

FREE GIFT WHEN YOU SUBSCRIBE TO AW TODAY

Look forward to the season ahead with a 3 month subscription to AW for only £24.99* PLUS get a free gel belt from Ronhill (RRP £20).

RONHILL

The Ronhill Marathon Waist Belt is designed to carry all your marathon essentials with comfort and ease.

It features:

- Reflective trim
- 8 Gel loops
- 2 loop sizes accommodate 32-60ml gels
- Secure pocket
- Race number fasteners
- Adjustable waist strap

Your subscription to AW not only delivers the magazine to your door every month, as well as digitally to your mobile phone or tablet, but you will also receive the weekly newsletter straight to your inbox, AND have access to the AW archive back to 2011. So don't miss out on this special offer, simply call:

01778 392018 quoting **RH0323** or go to
www.mymagazinesub.co.uk/athletics-weekly/promo/RH0323

*£24.99 for the first 3 months then £9.99 per month.
**Offer ends 30th April and is available until then while stocks last

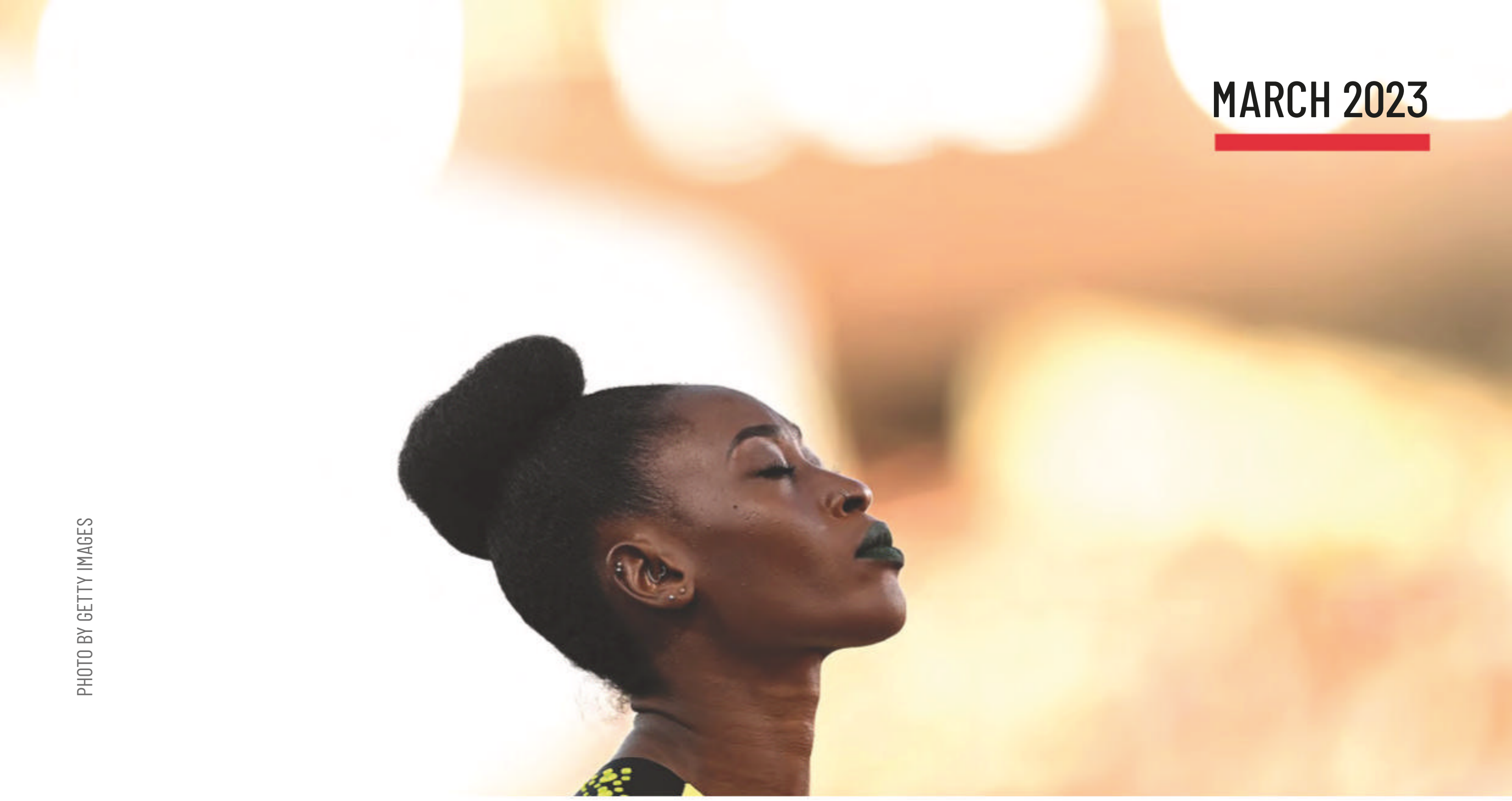


PHOTO BY GETTY IMAGES

PURSUIT OF POSSIBILITY

Euan Crumley
AW Editorial Director

In my experience, athletics has a very good way of stopping you from getting ahead of yourself. How many of us, for example, have finished a training session thinking that – at last – we've cracked it, only to turn up for the next one and those same legs which had been turning over so smoothly now feel more akin to a broken deckchair? Where running had seemed so effortless, now all of a sudden it takes every ounce of energy just to keep going in a straight line?

I had just that very experience (for the umpteenth time) recently. I had had one of those sessions where everything clicks. I could feel I was running well and some nice comments from the training group confirmed my suspicions. I practically floated home.

It was with some excitement, then, that I laced up my shoes for my next interval session a few days later. It was to be a shorter, sharper, solo affair but my ego told me this was going to serve as nothing but a reminder as to how well I was doing, that the benefits of my training were starting to properly kick in.

I began to curse that ego as I struggled to find form, rhythm, speed… you name it, it wasn't there. There was considerably less bounce to my step on the return journey this time.

However, when I got home and looked over the splits, it became apparent that, though it wasn't perfect, I had still managed to get some good work done. It wasn't brilliant, I hadn't felt great, but it had been pretty consistent. It was my perception of the run which had been the big difference.

The human mind has a lot to answer for. It can be your biggest ally or your worst enemy, as sportspeople know all too well. That's why we decided to devote a large part of this issue to the psychological side of athletics, to hear from the athletes, coaches and psychologists about their experiences and how to go about navigating the highs and lows – no matter what level at which you are competing.

Part of the "mind power" section is a beautifully written feature by author Richard Askwith, about the world of masters athletics. He has produced a wonderful book about the individuals who, despite advancing age and declining physical capabilities, continue to compete, to search for improvement, to better themselves – and also just spend time in each other's company, taking part in the sport they love. There is a lot to be learned from them.

There will be good days and bad days but, if you're lucky, there will be the chance to go again. And chase that feeling of possibility.

AW CONTENTS

PUBLISHING

AW, 21six Sport Ltd, The Barn, Calcot Mount,
Calcot Lane, Curdridge, Hampshire, SO32 2BN

General enquiries:
officemanager@athleticsweekly.com

athleticsweekly.com
twitter @athleticsweekly
facebook.com/athleticsweekly
instagram/athletics.weekly

EDITORIAL

Editorial director **Euan Crumley**
euan.crumley@athleticsweekly.com
Head of digital **Jason Henderson**
jason.henderson@athleticsweekly.com
Results editor **Steve Smythe**
results@athleticsweekly.com
Product reviewer **Paul Freary**
paul.freary@athleticsweekly.com
Editorial assistant **Georgie Heath**
georgie.heath@athleticsweekly.com
Digital assistant **Tim Adams**
tim.adams@athleticsweekly.com
Photographer **Mark Shearman MBE**
mark@athleticsimages.com

Photography by Mark Shearman (unless stated)
Cover photo by Dan Vernon

Design: Joe Provis, Rob Whitehouse

Editorial contributors: Katy Barden, Hannah Borenstein, Paul Halford, Paul Hobrough, Tim Hutchings, Jason Karp, Katharine Merry, Verity Ockenden, John Shepherd, Stuart Weir, Mark Woods

AW athlete panel: Harry Aikines-Aryeetey, Tom Bosworth, Holly Bradshaw, Hannah Cockroft, Melissa Courtney-Bryant, Hannah England, Brendan Foster, Elliot Giles, Sally Gunnell, Tim Hutchings, Colin Jackson, Jess Warner-Judd, Dave Moorcroft, Laviai Nielsen, Steph Twell, Jake Wightman, Matt Yates

ADVERTISING

Head of Sales **Paul Bramley**
07976 471245 / paul.bramley@athleticsweekly.com

PUBLISHING AND PRINTING

Managing Director **Wendy Sly MBE**
wendy.sly@athleticsweekly.com
Published by 21six Sport Ltd
Printed by Precision Colour Printing

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND BACK ISSUES

Warners Group Tel: 01778-392018
subscriptions@warnersgroup.co.uk
backissues@warnersgroup.co.uk
© AW 2020. Registered at the Post Office as a newspaper

While *AW* takes every care to help readers with training, diet and injuries, neither they, nor their contributors, can accept responsibility for illness or injury caused as a result of advice given. We also cannot take responsibility for loss or damage to supplied material.

AW takes no responsibility for the content of advertisements placed in the magazine.

ISTANBUL 2023

REVIEW

TALKING POINTS FROM TURKEY

Istanbul managed to squeeze a memorable European Indoor Championships into a tightly packed weekend of action

WORDS: **TIM ADAMS, EUAN CRUMLEY** AND **JASON HENDERSON**

Many of the continent's best athletes are still catching their breath. The 37th edition of the European Indoor Athletics Championships proved to be a hectic, dizzying and history-making affair as records tumbled and medals were won.

As with all of the best indoor championships, a huge amount was squeezed into a tight space which made for thrills and spills of the most intense variety.

Yes, there were predictable moments. No fewer than nine athletes successfully defended titles and there was little surprise in the likes of Jakob Ingebrigtsen, Femke Bol, Laura Muir and Keely Hodgkinson striking gold once again, for example, but even some of the expected champions added another dimension.

Nafi Thiam's pentathlon world record was a moment to savour, while Karsten Warholm's "stupid" scorching opening 200m of 20.84 seconds put him in the kind of lactic-flooded second-lap jeopardy that made the men's 400m final such compelling viewing.

It was the gold medals of Warholm, Ingebrigtsen and pole vaulter Sondre Guttormsen which put Norway on top of the final table but there were a number of talking points to come out of Turkey. The AW team casts an eye over the big moments of a memorable weekend.

MEDALS TABLE

RANK	NATION	G	S	B	TOTAL
1	Norway	4	1	0	5
2	Netherlands	3	3	1	7
3	Great Britain	3	1	2	6
4	Italy	2	4	0	6
5	Belgium	2	1	3	6
6	Portugal	2	0	1	3
6	Switzerland	2	0	1	3
8	Finland	2	0	0	2
9	France	1	2	3	6
10	Germany	1	2	1	4
11	Greece	1	2	0	3
12	Ukraine	1	1	2	4
13	Spain	1	1	0	2
14	Turkey	1	0	0	1
15	Poland	0	4	3	7
16	Slovenia	0	2	0	2
17	Sweden	0	1	3	4
18	Czech Rep	0	1	1	2
18	Romania	0	1	1	2
20	Serbia	0	0	2	2
21	Estonia	0	0	1	1

22 ATHLETICSWEEKLY.COM

22 The big moments from the European Indoor Championships

MIND POWER

JAZMIN SAWYERS

CAPTAIN FANTASTIC

Over the next 24 pages, we explore how the mental side of sport plays such a crucial role. We start with a gold medal-winning moment from Jazmin Sawyers which proved just how powerful a change in mindset can be

WORDS: **JASON HENDERSON** AND **EUAN CRUMLEY**

Jazmin Sawyers will always have Istanbul. The first golden moment of the long jumper's career was, however, forged in Munich.

Sawyers had arrived at last year's European Championships despondent and kicking herself at an opportunity which she felt had been missed just a handful of days earlier at the Commonwealth Games, where she had come fourth in front of a Birmingham crowd which was doing its level best to roar her on to the podium.

It had taken a lot of effort to drag herself off the canvas. While it hadn't been a knockout blow, the 28-year-old travelled to Germany feeling like she was on the ropes.

Despite her best efforts, there had been no medal-winning moments for six years. The doubts weren't so much creeping in as staging a full-scale assault.

"When it's been that long you start to doubt you can do it," she said last summer. "Even though I'd seen the signs and I'd been jumping well, you start to wonder 'can I still produce the goods?'"

Yet Sawyers "loves a championships" and, as she took her mark in the Munich Olympic stadium for her sixth and final jump, something changed. The belief came back.

A jump of 6.80m moved her into the bronze medal spot – a position in which she would stay.

"Munich proved to me that I could get back on the podium and also shifted my mindset," she said. "I had always said prior to Munich that I was the sort of person that hated losing more than winning, and that feeling of making the podium in Munich was better than anything I'd ever experienced. That feeling has spurred me on."

It's a feeling which also put her in a different frame of mind at the European Indoor Championships – and not just because she had was captain of the British team. It took one jump, of 6.71m, "well ▷

34 ATHLETICSWEEKLY.COM

ATHLETICSWEEKLY 35

34 How Jazmin Sawyers laid the foundations for a golden long jump moment

MIND POWER

MASTERS ATHLETES

Older, slower, BETTER

Richard Askwith, author of a new book about running in later life, looks at what motivates ageing athletes to keep going – and finds that the high achievers of Masters athletics deserve far greater recognition

I have been interested in running for much of my longish life: not just doing it but watching it and soaking up its rich traditions. Yet I was almost 60 before I discovered Ed Whitlock. I had never heard of Olga Kotelko, either, at that point; or of Earl Fee; or of a host of other giants of early 21st century track and field – multiple world record-holders and champions – whose golden athletic years coincided with my own period of greatest interest in the sport.

Why not? Because I wasn't watching. Year after year, athletes such as Charles Allie, Guido Müller, Nicole Alexis, Angela Copson, Gene Dykes, Caroline Powell, Clare Elms, Tommy Hughes, Yoko Nakono and Mariko Yugeta would push back the boundaries of human possibility. And year after year I missed them. ▷

52 The masters athletes still going in pursuit of excellence

IN THIS ISSUE

DIGEST

8 Picture this – a dramatic finish in Istanbul
10 British team becoming an exclusive club
12 Why agents, athletes and media need to be able to work together
14 Katharine Merry on why we can't take the sport's world record-breakers for granted

MY GREATEST RACE

16 Paula Dunn casts her mind back to a 100m which changed her outlook completely

RISING STAR

18 Oscar Schofield on raising his standards and dining with Keely Hodgkinson

TALKING POINTS FROM TURKEY

22 A look back over the big moments from a very eventful European Indoor Championships

TWO GREAT SCOTS

30 Steve Smythe examines the careers of Yvonne Murray and Tom McKean

MIND POWER

34 How finding happiness led Jazmin Sawyers to a golden long jump moment
38 Marco Airale, the coach guiding the careers of Britain's sprinters via precision and passion
44 Verity Ockenden on why finding balance has been key when it comes to athletics
48 Sports pyschologist Josephine Perry outlines her approach and gives her top tips
52 Richard Askwith writes about the masters athletes who are still striving for success

BATHURST BITES

60 The best images from a World Cross Country Championships which was brutally testing

STILL GIVING HER ALL

64 Harriet Knowles-Jones on overcoming illness and making up for lost time

PUNCHING BELOW ITS WEIGHT

68 Could Britian be providing more competition opportunities outside of the major events?

RANGE FINDER

72 Jo Zakrzewski on moving up from the marathon and setting a world record

PERFORMANCE

74 The latest news and research
76 How They Train with Hannah Nuttall
78 Why you should put speed first
82 John Shepherd's advice to coaches
84 Ask the Physio with Paul Hobrough
86 Paul Freary tests the most comfortable kit

RESULTS

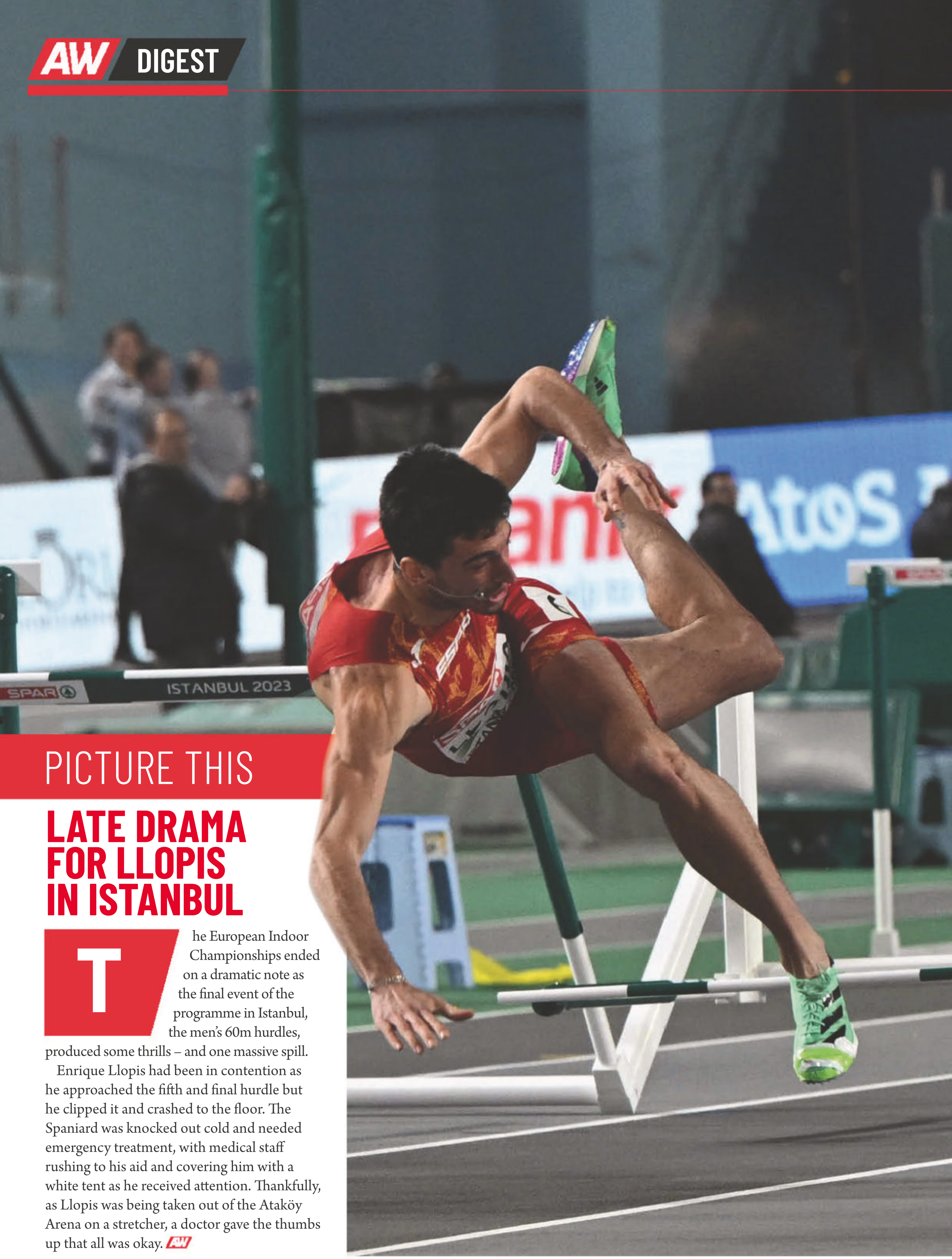
90 Round-up of the last month's action

CLOSING STRETCH

93 A Lap With... Ellie Baker
94 Tackle our 10 quiz teasers
96 Have Your Say: readers' letters
98 Dip Finish

COVER IMAGE: GETTY IMAGES

NEXT MONTH
Marathon special including previews to London and Boston
ON SALE APRIL 13



PICTURE THIS

LATE DRAMA FOR LLOPIS IN ISTANBUL

The European Indoor Championships ended on a dramatic note as the final event of the programme in Istanbul, the men's 60m hurdles, produced some thrills – and one massive spill.

Enrique Llopis had been in contention as he approached the fifth and final hurdle but he clipped it and crashed to the floor. The Spaniard was knocked out cold and needed emergency treatment, with medical staff rushing to his aid and covering him with a white tent as he received attention. Thankfully, as Llopis was being taken out of the Ataköy Arena on a stretcher, a doctor gave the thumbs up that all was okay.

SZYMANSKI
I RUN CLEAN
ISTANBUL 2023
SUISSE
JOSEPH
I RUN CLEAN
ISTANBUL 2023

PHOTO BY OZAN KOSE

PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES

AN EXCLUSIVE CLUB

UKA is opting to follow swimming's example in a bid to find greater success on the world and Olympic stage, but will the approach stop vital opportunities for athletes?

"I think you need to see the bigger picture but I also understand it's not just about making up the numbers."

Eilidh Doyle, winner of 17 major championships medals across her career, was summing up – rather nicely – the debate sparked by the news that UK Athletics is adopting "a sharper edge" when it comes to selection policy and take smaller teams to this year's World Championships in Budapest and the 2024 Paris Olympics.

It is a sink-or-swim formula that worked impressively for UKA chief executive Jack Buckner in his previous post in charge of British Swimming, with Adam Peaty and Duncan Scott leading a gold rush at their sport's most successful-ever Games in Tokyo as part of a ring-fenced group of elite talents who are based at Stirling, Bath and Loughborough.

Track and field failed to deliver a single golden moment at the delayed Games with Laura Muir and Keely Hodgkinson's silvers as good as it got two years ago. Those came from a squad of 65 in Japan – 15 fewer than at Rio 2016 – but with many travelling without a real shot at the podium.

"There will be a bit of a shift in our selection philosophy which is going to be quite hard in some ways," said Buckner. "We will be moving towards a philosophy more about performance. It will have a slightly sharper edge. You need to really focus on the big hitters. We could have a list of six to 10 names and we need to be all over them. We need to identify where the medals are coming from and have the right resources in place."

It's a policy which has been seen before, of course, most recently during the Charles van Commenee era. Doyle, however, argues there is nothing quite like learning on the job. Athletes like Hodgkinson winning an Olympic medal at their first attempt are the exception rather than the rule, after all.

"[This policy] does make me feel a little bit uncomfortable because I think there is so much to be gained from experiences and learning," the former 400m hurdler told *AW*.

ABOVE: Eilidh Doyle (second from right) enjoying 4x400m relay success at the Rio Olympics

What they said

"Everyone dreams of being a medallist and representing your country. Sometimes it goes your way, sometimes it doesn't. Sport is great but brutal. What's the point of working hard for years if you're granted no opportunity at the end? Help athletes, stop putting barriers in the way!"
Jess Warner-Judd, Tokyo Olympian

"It would be interesting to see how many current international medallists made their first team as 'potential medallist'? Regardless of ability, athletics is also about the tactics, falls, nerves and mistakes. This can't be measured by probability. You shouldn't underestimate an underdog."
Holly Archer, European indoor 1500m silver medallist

> YOU NEED TO LEARN YOUR CRAFT AND I WORRY THAT THIS MIGHT TAKE AWAY FROM THOSE OPPORTUNITIES

"When I went to the London 2012 Olympics, I almost quit the sport because I didn't have a great experience there – it was very overwhelming for me and that was my first Olympics. Obviously it was a home Olympics so there were different elements there but I think some athletes can go into arenas and be overwhelmed and it's about learning from that [kind of experience].

"You need to be given those opportunities to go there – and it shouldn't just be about going there and winning medals. All athletes want to win medals. So, whether you have a medal target or not, athletes aren't going out there trying not to win medals – that's what we want to do. The other thing they need to look at is what experiences are these athletes having?

"It might be their first experience of two call-up rooms, it might be their first experience of a big introduction to the crowd. That might not seem like a big thing but, at the Doha World Championships in 2019 they did the big light show [as athletes were being introduced]. Now I've never experienced that before and if that was your first championships then it could be a very intimidating experience. You need to learn your craft and I worry that this might take away from those opportunities."

Doyle does agree there are a growing number of medal opportunities emerging for the British team. However, she can clearly recall when many of them earned vital championships experience, if not individual medals.

"I think our standards have changed because we do have athletes who are going and winning medals now," she said.

"Before it was Mo Farah and Jess Ennis-Hill and Greg Rutherford that you were relying on for medals, whereas we now have quite a few more we can look to.

"They are really important but you then also want everybody else to have good experiences so they can be the future. I look back to the 2017 World Championships. I was captain of the team so I was asked a lot about the team's performance.

"The suggestion was that we'd only just hit the medal target and that was only because of Mo and the relays. But, actually, Dina [Asher-Smith] was fourth, Laura [Muir] was fourth – so were Nethaneel [Mitchell-Blake] and Kyle Langford.

"They didn't win medals but they had a great experience there which was, potentially, the reason why they went on to win the medals they did."

Buckner insists the financially-stricken governing body hasn't plotted the move due to cash concerns, with its world-class programme underwritten by Lottery funds. A total of 66 of the UK's Paris 2024 Olympic prospects are on that squad this year. That tally may change, too. "Potentially there will be less athletes funded," he said.

WORLD ATHLETICS INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIPS GLASGOW 24
1-3 March

PHOTO BY JSH PIX

Event Ambassador Eilidh Doyle was marking one year to go until the 2024 World Indoor Championships in Glasgow.
To pre-register for tickets, visit: wicglasgow24.com

HODGKINSON
BIRMINGHAM 23
SEIKO
NATIONAL RECORD
1:57.18

PHOTO BY GETTY IMAGES

SELL, SELL, SELL

Former *Telegraph* athletics correspondent **Ben Bloom** says athletes and agents need to work with, rather than against, the media if athletics is to survive and grow its profile

A little under a year ago, sitting in the bowels of the newly-renovated Alexander Stadium, I asked Keely Hodgkinson a question as she spoke to assembled media the day before the Birmingham Diamond League.

Hodgkinson possesses all the attributes required to be a sporting superstar: a staggering level of talent, an unyielding determination and an infectious, captivating personality. She is not there yet – the breakout leap from athletics domination to mainstream recognition is one that few manage – but everything is in place for Keely to follow the likes of Jess, Mo and Dina in becoming the sport's next one-name sensation in Britain.

"Is your mum still coming round to do your washing and cook meals for you?" I asked Hodgkinson, light-heartedly. She laughed, having a few weeks earlier happily described her difficulties in getting to grips with the mundanities of day-to-day life since purchasing and moving solo into her first flat.

It had been an amusing and hugely endearing insight into the realities of being catapulted into the highest echelons of global sport while still grappling with the transition from childhood to adulthood; a reminder that, aside from her superhuman running ability, she was as relatable as any 20-year-old.

Yet stationed a couple of metres beside Hodgkinson, her agent was less amused by my not-so-serious line of enquiry. "What kind of question was that?" she muttered, shaking her head (while Hodgkinson cheerily regaled us with her culinary failings), presumably bemoaning my efforts to expand the Hodgkinson story beyond her track endeavours and reveal the impressive young woman behind the medals.

It was an all-too-frequent, painful reminder of athletics' ability to shoot itself in the foot.

There is an inconvenient truth that many within the sport and plenty of those who follow it do not want to hear: athletics is in an existential fight that it is in danger of losing.

Despite astonishing global talents like Mondo Duplantis, Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone and Jakob Ingebrigtsen (to name a miniscule few) producing jaw-dropping performances on a regular basis, athletics is not far off its knees in the global sports sphere. The stunning British records from Hodgkinson, Asher-Smith and Neil Gourley at the Birmingham World Indoor Tour Final last month were watchable only on red buttons and websites.

> **CREATE RIVALRIES, SPEAK OUT, BE CONTENTIOUS IF YOU LIKE. OFFER INSIGHT, BE REAL, SHOW YOUR PERSONALITY. HOWEVER YOU CHOOSE TO DO IT, TALK**

A couple of months ago, I was made redundant after eight years as the *Telegraph* newspaper's athletics correspondent, with bosses deciding they no longer needed someone in the role. As 12-time global champion Michael Johnson – a man unafraid to criticise in his quest for improvement – responded to news of my departure: "What does this say about the health of the sport?"

The decision (which I, unsurprisingly, do not agree with) that a major British newspaper should operate without a dedicated athletics writer is reflective of the battle the sport is facing in the mainstream.

In a competitive sporting marketplace that is sadly increasingly engulfed by football, athletics must do all it can to survive. It is a fight that involves everything from competitions to governance, broadcasting to sponsorship. Which is where the Hodgkinson question comes in.

Athletes and agents have a crucial role to play in marketing the sport they love. Engage with the media to boost your own brand and help keep athletics in the spotlight. Create rivalries, speak out, be contentious if you like. Offer insight, be real, show your personality. However you choose to do it, talk.

In boxing (ignoring the questionable morals and frequent rejection of good taste), it is common before big fights for each correspondent to be individually invited into camp separate from any other journalist, thus ensuring every media outlet carries a unique, sizeable piece: the perfect way to ensure widespread coverage. In athletics, major events are often preceded by the biggest names conducting a short group press conference only, while others refuse to talk altogether.

TOYOTA
RICHARDSON

ABOVE: Keely Hodgkinson

LEFT: Sha'carri Richardson

There seems to exist, among many in the athletics community, a belief that the media is permanently negative. It is not the case. Relationships between a tiny proportion of certain athletes and certain journalists might be fraught, but the media's praise heaped upon British medal winners is uniform. And, unlike in football, cricket or rugby, when athletes perform poorly they are not subject to criticism in the media – they tend to simply be ignored.

When people do bad things in athletics – or, indeed, any walk of life – the media is correct to hold them to account. Even then, controversy need not be negative. After leaving her coach Rana Reider in the wake of his sexual misconduct allegations, Daryll Neita was an open book, seizing the initiative and telling journalists: "Ask me anything you want."

When Kyle Langford was fined for an altercation with an athletics official, he apologised repeatedly while discussing the situation at length with the media.

Of course, controversy generates interest. There is a reason why Sha'Carri Richardson is spoken about so much and it is not to do with winning global medals, because she has none.

This is not a plea for all athletes to behave like Richardson (even if that would be a journalist's dream!). Everyone is perfectly entitled to reveal as much or as little to the wider world as they desire. But the sport needs to sell its heroes if it is going to survive. She cannot cook, but Hodgkinson is too good a runner to be hidden behind a red button.

What I learned as the Telegraph's athletics correspondent

Britain is No.1 for big events...
Forget the fact that, in some disciplines, the competition was a lower standard than the British Championships, the Alexander Stadium crowds for last year's Commonwealth Games epitomised why Britain is the best country in the world for major sports events. See also: Glasgow 2014, London 2017, Birmingham 2018, Glasgow 2019.

... but no one loves throwing like Germany
So often relegated to an after-thought, the throwing events at competitions in Germany are given centre stage and flourish like you would not believe. You have not experienced watching athletics until you have seen 50,000 Germans going bonkers for the hammer.

Athletics feats are under-appreciated
The trouble with athletes is that they are too good. It is impossible to relate to how spectacular their achievements are on TV. Only by watching up close can your mind boggle at just how high 2.44m or how far 98.48m are. Somehow, athletics needs to make the world realise how superhuman these feats are.
» *(Read Katharine Merry p14)*

Everyone must go to the Götzis Hypo-Meeting
I cannot really stress this enough: the congregation of the world's best decathletes and heptathletes in a tiny Austrian town every May is the best athletics event you will ever attend. If you love athletics, go. If you don't love athletics, go. It is brilliant.

PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES

SOMETHING TO BE TRULY SAVOURED

We have to be careful not to make the extraordinary feats of these world record-breakers seem like everyday achievements, writes **Katharine Merry**

I've decided to give it a name. "Mondo syndrome" is, I think, an appropriate term for when the truly special performances which are coming at us with extraordinary regularity are being treated almost as everyday occurrences. I think we have to be really careful in normalising the sensational things that this current generation of athletes are doing.

In recent weeks we have seen Ryan Crouser breaking the shot put world record yet again and Mondo Duplantis doing likewise with the pole vault. The outside reaction doesn't always match the achievement, though. "Oh, it's a world record again. Yeah, great."

What the majority of people don't understand is just how much of a privilege it is to be in a position to even attempt a world record, let alone break one. When Laura Muir went for it over 1000m at the World Indoor Tour Birmingham we saw just how difficult it is. Keely Hodgkinson had been targeting the indoor mark for 800m at the same meeting so, when she *only* set a British record there was almost a sense of disappointment. The standard she's been running at is amazing!

Keely and Laura winning the recent European indoor titles again was expected, but an athlete still has to go and deliver, and there is that pressure to deal with, too.

We also have to remember that, in Mondo, we are witnessing the best there's ever been in his event.

ABOVE: Femke Bol celebrates her historic run in Apeldoorn

RIGHT: Mondo Duplantis chose his moment

> BY RUNNING A TIME LIKE THAT AT THIS POINT IN THE YEAR, FEMKE BOL HAS SENT OUT A HUGE MESSAGE

Katharine
Merry

Olympic medallist and broadcaster

@KatharineMerry

@katharine.merry

We have to appreciate that and we have to appreciate what we're seeing.

I honestly think Femke Bol is starting to move into a similar realm, because to run 49.26 and smash the world indoor 400m best – as she did at her national indoor championships – is absolutely outstanding.

I ran 50.5 indoors in Birmingham which was a British and Commonwealth record at the time before Nicola Sanders came and smashed it apart with her run of 50.02. After Femke's performance, myself and Nicola traded messages on social media saying just how gobsmacked we were by what this Dutch superstar had done. She's phenomenal and what she's achieving is exciting on a few levels.

First of all, getting rid of that infamous mark of 49.59 by Jarmila Kratochvilova which had stood since 1982 and which had so much suspicion around it, is a massive step forward for the sport.

You will get the odd person who says: "Well, if Kratochvilova ran that time and she potentially wasn't clean, then you also have to question Femke". I understand why they would ask that but I don't believe it's the case. I think it's a very big deal to have removed a record – such a big milestone – like that.

The other reason to start getting excited is when you think about how this performance might affect what happens when we move outdoors this summer.

Femke is, of course, a 400m hurdles specialist but everyone in that event has been playing second fiddle to Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone in recent years. Does Femke's improving speed mean that the huge gap we saw at last year's World Championships is potentially going to start closing?

By running a time like that at this point in the year, she has sent out a huge message and it will certainly have raised a few eyebrows in Sydney's camp. The time resonates massively and bodes very well for the whole event.

Running 400m indoors is very different to running it outdoors in a number of ways. For starters, you're running two laps of the track rather than one and in terms of tactics, markers and cues it's a totally different kettle of fish.

One thing which is exactly the same, though, is that running the distance well is all about building rhythm. If you asked me to describe how to run a good 400m I'd say it's about finding consistent speed and consistent rhythm. It's crucial to find it early on in the race. For me, that point came after about 80m and then it was a case of being like a metronome or a ticking clock, and holding my speed, then pushing again down the back straight if indoors for the final time and holding on for the rest of the way! Indoors or outdoors, it hurts just the same, too!

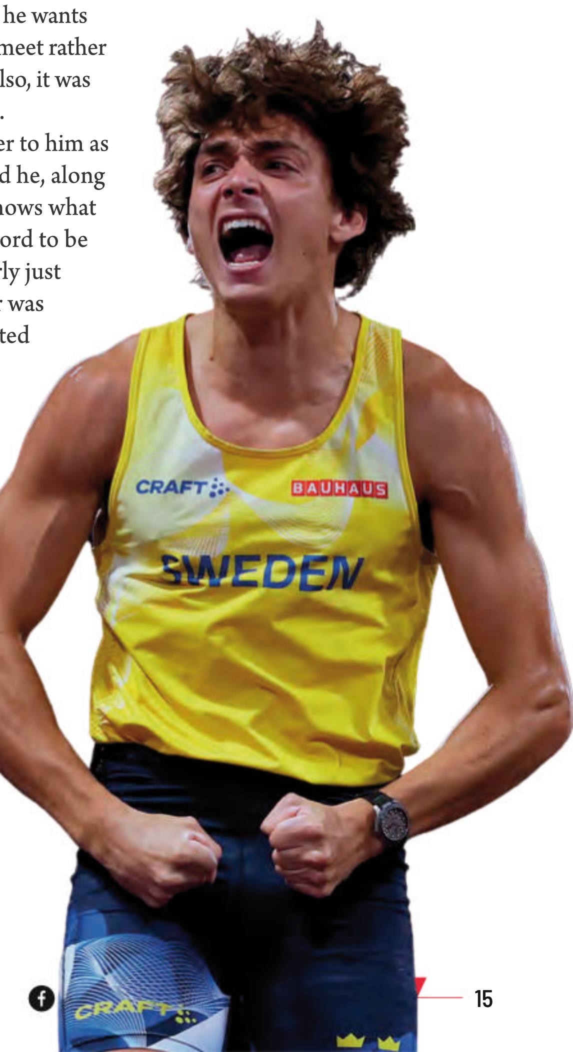
Coming back round to Mondo, and him having now broken the world record six times, I noticed a few disparaging comments after his 6.22m. Some people were questioning why he was ending his indoor season at the event staged by Renaud Lavillenie, the man he succeeded as world record-holder, rather than contesting the European Indoor Championships.

Firstly, I think Mondo has more than earned the right to decide where and when he wants to compete. He opted for a one-off meet rather than another Championships but, also, it was about his friendship with Lavillenie.

Renaud has been like a big brother to him as he developed through the sport and he, along with Mondo, therefore certainly knows what needs to be in place for a world record to be achieved. The fact that he was clearly just as ecstatic as Mondo when that bar was cleared also showed just how invested he was in making that magic moment happen.

His reaction would have been the same had it happened in Birmingham or Budapest, but the fact it happened at a meeting which was created to help raise the standards of pole vaulting just made it extra special. I also love the fact that it was the third attempt and I love the fact that it was Mondo's last vault of the indoor season.

We're only in March, but already it looks like this summer is going to be unmissable.



PAULA **DUNN**

MY GREATEST RACE

Northern Championships, Manchester, 1986
100 metres, 1st place, 11.4 seconds

After lagging behind her contemporaries at youth level, the two-time Commonwealth medallist finally hit her stride in a sprinting race that proved she had found her feet among the elite

ABOVE: being patient paid off handsomely for Paula Dunn

RIGHT: the sprinter competing for England at the 1986 Commonwealth Games

It’s really easy to get fixated and think that, if you haven't succeeded at under-18s or under-20s, it's not going to happen. People develop at different rates. Puberty kicks in differently for both male and females. You shouldn’t get despondent if you don't have this magnificent junior career. Because we know being an outstanding junior doesn't mean you're going to be an outstanding senior.

It took me a while to get used to training. And it took me a while to get my mindset that this is what I wanted to do. A positive back then for us was that there was no social media, so you didn't have this ability to keep comparing yourself to everybody else. You had to wait until *AW* came out the week after to know what people had done.

People now can go online and you can get really fixated and distracted, whereas I had time just to develop: physically, emotionally and mentally.

We had a really good training group that included Shirley Strong who had gone to the

FACTFILE

Born: Dec 3, 1964

Events: 100m and 200m

PBs: 11.15 and 22.69

International achievements:

1994: Commonwealth 100m and 4x100m relay bronze

1990: European Championships 4x100m relay bronze; Commowealth 4x100m silver

1986: Commonwealth 100m silver and 4x100m relay gold

1984 Olympics in Los Angeles and came back with a silver medal in the 100m hurdles. After training together all that winter, my coach sat me down and said: “If you get really serious about this, if you put a really good winter in, you could do really well.” Up to then, I was only going three times a week. I was still working, just being young, still just going out with my friends. I was only 19.

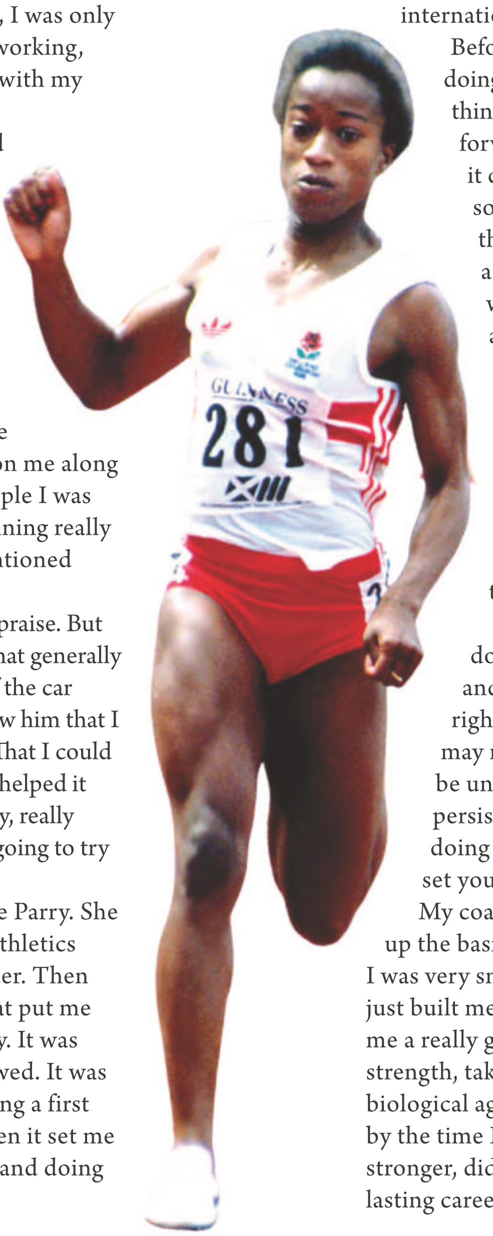
I trained really hard that winter and didn't miss a session. I did weights, everything I was supposed to do and started the season really well. I won the county championships but, in the context of my career, the Northern Championships were important to me.

My coach Jim Harris was driving us to the event and I didn't notice the reverse psychology he was working on me along the way. He went through all the people I was going to be racing. He said: “X is running really well. Y was really fast.” He never mentioned anything about me.

The way I function, I don't really do praise. But if you say I can't do something, then that generally gets the best out of me. So I got out of the car really annoyed and determined to show him that I was really good. That I could do this. That I could step it up when it matters. It probably helped it was a really long journey so I was really, really irritated. Jim was telling people I was going to try and prove a point.

I used to train with a girl called Jane Parry. She was really good – at swimming and athletics – really young and I'd never beaten her. Then I went and won this race in 11.4. That put me in the top two or three in the country. It was the catalyst for everything that followed. It was the springboard for me towards getting a first international vest in that year and then it set me up for the Commonwealth Games – and doing really well from 1986 onwards.

> "THAT RACE WAS THE CATALYST FOR EVERYTHING THAT FOLLOWED. IT WAS THE SPRINGBOARD FOR ME TOWARDS GETTING A FIRST INTERNATIONAL VEST AND SET ME UP FOR THE COMMONWEALTH GAMES



Jim was super chuffed because he'd asked me: “When are you going to do really well?”

We stopped for fish and chips on the way home, which is probably not the best thing to do, but I walked away that night thinking: “I'm actually a good athlete, I could do well in this sport.” It felt the appropriate thing for me going forward was being good on a national or international level.

Before that day, I probably thought doing well regionally was fine and so I think that's where, mentally, I took a step forward. There's always a race where it clicks and you could actually do something quite good. For me, it was that race. From that, I got selected for a B international. I went to Moscow with people like Clarence Callender and Tony Jarrett so it felt like the beginning of my career.

I went on to win the British Championships, which set me up to get selected for the Commonwealth Games in Edinburgh and Europeans in Stuttgart. That was the definitely the year where it came through.

Having that patience from a coach does help and if you put all the tools and all the building blocks in the right place, then it will happen. It just may not happen at under-20. It might be under-23. As athletes, we need to be persistent and very consistent and keep doing the basics really well. That will just set you up for future success.

My coach was really good about setting up the basics. I was probably quite immature. I was very small, quite light and very lean. He just built me up gradually, year by year, and gave me a really good foundation with speed and strength, taking into consideration not just my biological age, but my physicality as well. So by the time I emerged in 1986, I was physically stronger, didn't have many injuries and had a lasting career from such a good base. AW

RISING STAR

OSCAR **SCHOFIELD**

Georgie Heath speaks to a teenager who has swapped modern pentathlon for record-breaking

FACTFILE

Age: 16

Event: 1500m, 3000m, cross country

PBs: 1500m: 3:52.53i, Mile: 4:07.02i, 3000m: 8:24.09

Club: Sale Harriers Manchester

Coach: Trevor Painter and Jenny Meadows

At just 16, Oscar Schofield is already making headlines and setting records. In January he broke the British under-17 mark for the 1500m, as well as the mile – the latter by 14 seconds. He now has his sights firmly set on one day competing for Team GB at the Olympics. One of his training partners, Keely Hodgkinson, is cheering him all the way while Schofield's other training partner is a four-legged furry friend – his dog who is named after his hero, French distance runner Jimmy Gressier.

How did you discover your love for athletics?
I was pretty basic at local schools' cross country races. I wasn't winning and was coming fourth a lot. It was a tough battle between a lot of us and I was always the youngest, so it was just a good challenge. Then it just stepped up. I worked through to county level, national level and then hopefully international level soon. I hadn't taken it so seriously until the last two years where I've been training more progressively with a goal. When I was younger, I didn't do that. It was more just a fun run.

You're coached by Jenny Meadows and her husband Trevor Painter – how did that come about?
I used to do modern pentathlon, but then I met Jenny at an event day and got a session booked with Trevor and it went from there. We progressively started training once a week and now we're non-stop. They had an influence on me swapping from modern pentathlon, but I think I was ready to switch anyway. Swimming was my best event but I never swim anymore. After so many years of swimming up and down it's pretty boring and five in the morning is just too early to be in the pool.

What's it like to train alongside Keely Hodgkinson and see her achieving so much?
It's great. I train with her pretty much every week when she's around. It's inspirational and she gives me tips and advice. As a younger athlete, it's amazing to have that guidance and to see how far she has gone already. She always lets me know that she's there when I need her and I say the same. She reminds me that it's not always a clear path and the road can be bumpy at times but it is worth it and I can push through it.

Are you friends as well as training buddies?
Sure. We went to *Nando's* after training together recently.

What's your order?
We both had medium spice chicken butterfly and she had chips and garlic bread and I had chips and broccoli. I've got to get my greens in!

How good did it feel to set the British U17 indoor 1500m and mile record?
The 1500m was the tough one. I had a pacemaker until 800m and I was two minutes flat for that distance. When I realised I had 700m to go and was solo, I knew I could do it and ended up doing the last 400m in around 64 seconds.

I did really want to go sub 3:50 but when I saw 3:52 I told myself I should be happy with it because I worked so hard. It is a British record after all! The mile was great and I really enjoyed that one because I was running behind Zak Seddon for the whole race and he's an Olympian so that drove me on. It was the time I was hoping for so I was really happy. Now I just need to keep getting faster.

> MY FRIENDS UNDERSTAND THAT I HAVE TO TRAIN AND I ALSO HAVE TO MISS SOME PARTIES. BUT YOU HAVE TO GET YOUR HEAD DOWN IF YOU WANT TO BE AN OLYMPIAN AND THAT'S SO MUCH BETTER THAN ANY PARTY

We can't ignore that you have a puppy named after your favourite athlete, Jimmy Gressier. Is he your new training partner?
We call him Gressier. I've seen him [Jimmy] a couple of times in South Africa and my coach has contacted him to send me good luck messages. But the dog is now running with me in warm-ups and cooldowns, although he'd probably trip me up in the main sessions. But he's just going to get better and better and then we can be running buddies. I don't know if anyone would ever name a dog after me. Jimmy deserved it after his European records and his achievements but that's a long way off for me still.

What has been your best achievement to date?
I'd say my mile record. Everything came together. I didn't really get to celebrate because we had to drive all the way back from Lee Valley to Manchester but I did get drive-thru on the way home and got to miss school the next day.

How do you balance school, social life and training?
I always get to miss school on a Tuesday morning to get in a track session but, other than that, school is pretty much normal and I catch up on work at night. I'm studying for my GCSEs at the moment so I need to do the work. A lot of my friends are rugby players so they understand that I have to train and I also have to miss some parties. But you have to get your head down if you want to be an Olympian and that's so much better than any party.

What's next on the schedule for you?
A long, hard slog until summer. I'm off to Potchefstroom in South Africa for a training camp in April. It's good for the altitude and I'm a sun worshipper. We don't get that much of it in Manchester. I think I'll go in for a road race and do the Cheshire 5km and smash that out before the track season and use that altitude of Potchefstroom.

Then what is the ultimate dream?
LA 2028. I want to wear that Team GB vest at an Olympics. I'll get the tattoo and everything.

BUDAPEST WELCOMES THE WORLD

Get the best seats in the house with an official 2023 World Athletics Championships hospitality experience

WORLD ATHLETICS CHAMPIONSHIPS BUDAPEST 23

CADENCE CLUB
OFFICIAL HOSPITALITY EXPERIENCES

The World Athletics Championships Budapest 23 will be the largest sporting event in the history of Hungary, attended by 2000 athletes from over 200 countries and watched by more than one billion people.

It’s an event not to be missed so why not enjoy the action live and from the comfort of the CADENCE CLUB, the event's exclusive Hospitality offering?

For both CADENCE CLUB and CADENCE CLUB Finish Line packages, guests can expect nothing short of the best when it comes to food, wine, entertainment, hospitality and, most importantly, seating location.

The CADENCE CLUB offers a relaxed and comfortable hospitality experience, with an all-inclusive menu and a wide selection of beverages. This stylish hospitality space is a great place to entertain family and friends or your business guests ahead of the track and field action. Well-positioned seats on the home straight mean you won’t miss a thing!

The best seats in the house are located right on the finish line and that's where you will be – exactly where athletics history is made.

These exceptional seats come with an exclusive culinary and entertainment offering, meaning the CADENCE CLUB is the perfect WCH Budapest 23 experience. AW

For more information, scan the QR code or visit **daimani.com**

MEDALS TABLE

RANK	NATION	G	S	B	TOTAL
1	Norway	4	1	0	5
2	Netherlands	3	3	1	7
3	Great Britain	3	1	2	6
4	Italy	2	4	0	6
5	Belgium	2	1	3	6
6	Portugal	2	0	1	3
6	Switzerland	2	0	1	3
8	Finland	2	0	0	2
9	France	1	2	3	6
10	Germany	1	2	1	4
11	Greece	1	2	0	3
12	Ukraine	1	1	2	4
13	Spain	1	1	0	2
14	Turkey	1	0	0	1
15	Poland	0	4	3	7
16	Slovenia	0	2	0	2
17	Sweden	0	1	3	4
18	Czech Rep	0	1	1	2
18	Romania	0	1	1	2
20	Serbia	0	0	2	2
21	Estonia	0	0	1	1

TALKING POINTS FROM TURKEY

Istanbul managed to squeeze a memorable European Indoor Championships into a tightly packed weekend of action

WORDS: **TIM ADAMS, EUAN CRUMLEY** AND **JASON HENDERSON**

PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES AND EUROPEAN ATHLETICS

Many of the continent's best athletes are still catching their breath. The 37th edition of the European Indoor Athletics Championships proved to be a hectic, dizzying and history-making affair as records tumbled and medals were won.

As with all of the best indoor championships, a huge amount was squeezed into a tight space which made for thrills and spills of the most intense variety.

Yes, there were predictable moments. No fewer than nine athletes successfully defended titles and there was little surprise in the likes of Jakob Ingebrigtsen, Femke Bol, Laura Muir and Keely Hodgkinson striking gold once again, for example, but even some of the expected champions added another dimension.

Nafi Thiam's pentathlon world record was a moment to savour, while Karsten Warholm's "stupid" scorching opening 200m of 20.84 seconds put him in the kind of lactic-flooded second-lap jeopardy that made the men's 400m final such compelling viewing.

It was the gold medals of Warholm, Ingebrigtsen and pole vaulter Sondre Guttormsen which put Norway on top of the final table but there were a number of talking points to come out of Turkey. The *AW* team casts an eye over the big moments of a memorable weekend.

ABOVE: Nafi Thiam reflects on her record-breaking performance

THIAM OUT OF THIS WORLD

As the lactic flooded her legs coming off the final bend, doubts began to creep in as to whether or not Adrianna Sułek would even make it to the finish line of the 800m which brought the women's pentathlon competition to a close.

The Pole had given every shred of effort in not just trying to win European indoor gold but also to hunt down the world indoor record of 5013 points, which had been set at the same Ataköy Arena by Nataliya Dobrynska back in 2012.

Sułek did get to the line. Just. Her first-place finish in 2:07.17 did bring her a world record. Just. It was a mark which lasted for a little over six seconds.

This was, without doubt, the greatest indoor women's pentathlon ever contested. On any other occasion, a total of 5014 would have left Sułek in no doubt that she would be a convincing champion.

But Nafissatou Thiam is the most formidable of opponents and, such was the gap going into the final event, the Belgian two-time Olympic heptathlon champion would have had to finish eighth to relinquish her grip on the title she won in Toruń two years ago.

Thiam, instead, placed fourth with a time of 2:13.60. It gave her gold and the grandest total of 5055.

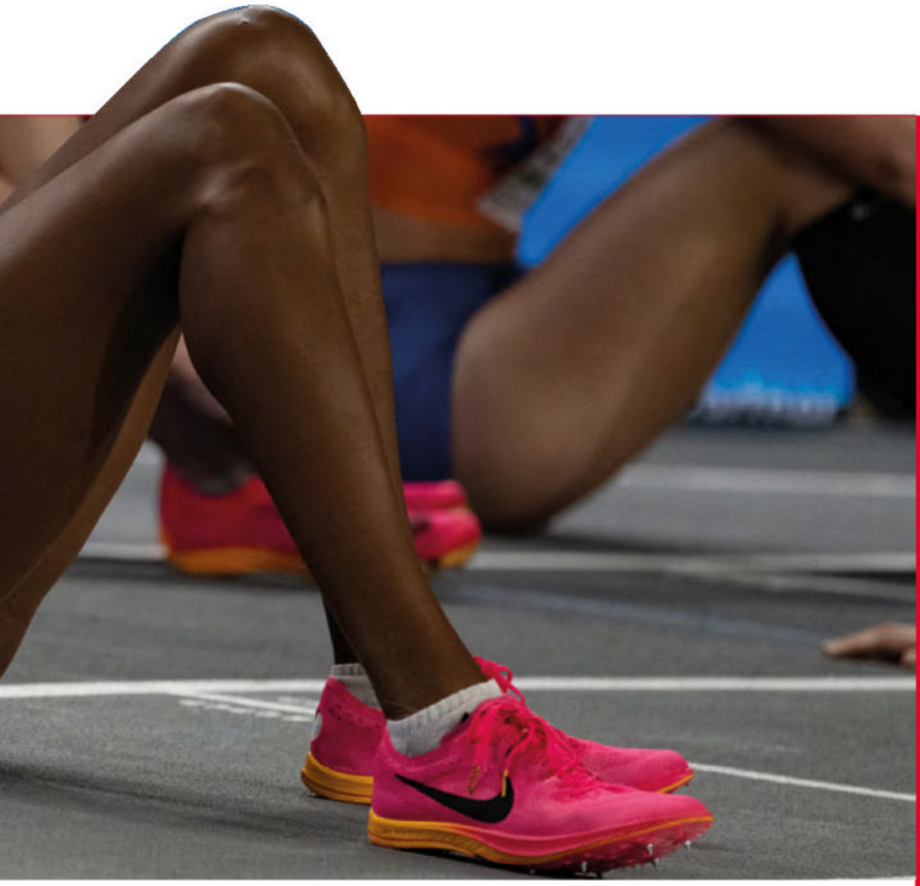
"Of course the world record was in my mind," said the now triple European indoor champion after this heavyweight battle. "But you need a good competition."

She was certainly given that and, though she insisted not everything was perfect, Thiam had a sense from the

The marks which broke a world record

- 60m hurdles: 8.23
- High jump: 1.92m
- Shot put: 15.54m
- Long Jump: 6.59m
- 800m: 2:13.60

LEFT: Adrianna Sulek was a record-holder for six seconds



off that she could be about to do something special in what was her first competitive outing of the year.

"After the 60m hurdles, I already felt like, 'oh, this can be my day'. The long jump and high jump could have been better. So I can still build on this."

Thiam was hugely complimentary of Sułek, who took great strides forward but must have been at least a little demoralised to have come up so painfully short.

The Pole set personal bests of 8.21 and 6.62m in the 60m hurdles and long jump respectively while she also equalled her best mark of 1.89m in the high jump.

For Thiam, she equalled her 60m hurdles PB with 8.23, before clearing 1.92m in the high jump and then producing a PB of 15.54m in the shot put which gave her a lead of 144 points with two events remaining. A long jump of 6.59 kept Thiam in control before she produced her fastest ever 800m indoors to secure the gold.

"I really wanted to have a world record and I have done everything," said Sułek. "I didn't expect that Nafi would fight in this style. I have ambitions. I will still work. It's my little fail today but I hope that in the future I will be the best in the world."

This contest will only make this summer even more highly anticipated. More medals records will be on these athletes' minds when the World Championships take place in Budapest in August.

Jackie Joyner-Kersee's heptathlon world record of 7291 points has lasted since 1988 and still seems impregnable. The closest Thiam came was a total of 7013 in 2017, after all, but the manner of this indoor effort – and the rising standard of competition (don't forget USA's Anna Hall recently produced 5004, too) – suggests some battles royal lie ahead.

ISTANBUL MEDALLISTS: **WOMEN**

60M
① Mujinga Kambundji SUI 7.00 =CR
② Ewa Swoboda POL 7.09
③ Daryll Neita GBR 7.12

400M
① Femke Bol NED 49.85
② Lieke Klaver NED 50.57
③ Anna Kiełbasińska POL 51.25

800M
① Keely Hodgkinson GBR 1:58.66
② Anita Horvat SLO 2:00.54
③ Agnes Raharolahy FRA 2:00.85

1500M
① Laura Muir GBR 4:03.40
② Claudia Bobocea ROM 4:03.76
③ Sofia Ennaoui POL 4:04.06

3000M
① Hanna Klein GER 8:35.87
② Konstanze Klosterhalfen GER 8:36.50
③ Melissa Courtney-Bryant GBR 8:41.19

60M HURDLES
① Reetta Nurska FIN 7.79 =NR
② Nadine Visser NED 7.84
③ Ditaji Kambundji SUI 7.91

HIGH JUMP
① Yaroslava Mahuchikh UKR 1.98m
② Britt Weerman NED 1.96m =NR
③ Kateryna Tabashnyk (UKR) 1.94m

POLE VAULT
① Wilma Murto FIN 4.80m NR
② Tina Sutej SLO 4.75m
③ Amalie Svabikova CZE 4.70m

LONG JUMP
① Jazmin Sawyers GBR 7.00m NR
② Larissa Iapichino ITA 6.97m NR
③ Ivana Vuleta SRB 6.91m

TRIPLE JUMP
① Tuğba Danişmaz TUR 14.31m NR
② Dariya Derkach ITA 14.20m
③ Patricia Mamona POR 14.16m

SHOT PUT
① Auriol Dongmo POR 19.76m
② Sara Gambetta GER 18.83m
③ Fanny Roos SWE 18.42m

PENTATHLON
① Nafissatou Thiam BEL 5055 WR
② Adrianna Sulek POL 5014 NR
③ Noor Vidts BEL 4823

4X400M RELAY
① Netherlands 3:25.66 CR
② Italy 3:28.61 NR
③ Poland 3:29.31

MUIR'S "PINCH ME" MOMENT

Before these championships, Laura Muir had spoken about her hopes of being able to make more use of the Secret Santa gift she had received from her friends last Christmas. That medal holder now has another piece of precious metal to hold.

In Istanbul, 1500m gold meant the 29-year-old moved out on her own in terms of British success. After "double double" gold over 1500m and 3000m in 2017 and 2019, she had been tied with Jason Gardener and Colin Jackson in terms of her career tally of top European indoor prizes. Her convincing win in Turkey now puts her into the lead.

Muir admits she is selective about which medals she keeps on display at her Glasgow home, but makes no secret about the significance of her hard-earned rewards from this continental showpiece.

Those gold medals of six years ago were the first major prizes of her career, while the following double two years later in front of a home crowd also helped pave the way towards the outdoor heights she has gone on to reach.

"I know they're not global medals, but they're more personal ones," says the Olympic silver and world bronze medallist. "2017 was a really significant championships for me. I was really disappointed with my performance from Rio [2016 Olympics]. So, to come back and really make that statement, it meant a lot to get those first medals on a senior stage. I'm well suited to indoors. It's something that I enjoy and it's a good benchmark.

"The winter would be really long if you had to go from September to May without any sort of interruption. It's nice to have that competitive atmosphere. To win medals and to compete, that's the fun bit.

"It's such an honour to win again and you could tell how much it meant to me. It's so surreal [to win five gold medals]. It's a bit of a pinch me moment! Every time it means a lot."

SPAR
MUIR
I RUN CLEAN
ISTANBUL 2023

GREAT BRITAIN
SPAR
HODGKINSON
JOE GALVIN
LEGEND

CLASSY KEELY

Laura Muir also admitted ahead of Istanbul to being "in awe" of what Keely Hodgkinson has managed to achieve in such a short time. It appeared that the Briton's opposition felt likewise in Istanbul as the newly-turned 21-year-old gave herself the perfect birthday present of a second European indoor 800m title.

It was all done with the minimum of fuss and Hodgkinson finished this indoor season with a world indoor 600m best, an unbeaten 800m record, a British record and this gold medal for her efforts.

Her mind was not all on matters in Turkey, however. Right before flying out to Istanbul, the Leigh Harrier's first coach had passed away unexpectedly. Joe Galvin, along with his partner Margaret, guided Hodgkinson through her early teenage years and helped to link her up with her current mentors – Trevor Painter and Jenny Meadows.

The Union Jack which the champion flew on her lap of her honour featured Galvin's name.

"He was such a great man and had so much belief in me," said Hodgkinson. "He gave so much to the sport and I dedicate this gold medal to him. He did so much for me. He got me to my first GB vest, my European youth gold [Győr 2018], my European under-020 bronze [Borås 2019]. He also helped me find Trevor [Painter]. Every time I met him he was like 'you're going to do this and this!'"

GOURLEY GROWING

Neil Gourley went into the 1500m final at the European Indoor Championships with new-found stamina, a withering sprint finish and, most importantly, the belief he could beat Olympic champion Jakob Ingebrigtsen to the line. Ultimately, though, the Norwegian prevailed, successfully defending his title, after a pulsating race that saw the two men separated by just 28 hundredths of a second at the finish. This was the archetypal front-runner versus the classic kicker.

"It was a good race and a good fight," said Ingebrigtsen, whose winning time of 3:32.95 was a championship record.

On the last lap it was a two-man race with Ingebrigtsen holding pole position and Gourley – who broke the British record five days earlier in Birmingham – poised to strike.

The tall Scot made his move down the back straight but Ingebrigtsen held him off and maintained his lead around the final bend. Gourley then tried to kick again coming into the home straight but the Norwegian had a small gap and slightly more strength.

Gourley was left to rue his lost opportunity. "I definitely believed I could win," he said. "He's one of the best ever to do this so it's always going to be hard to come up against someone like that.

"I put myself in the right places but I just didn't have it. I got beaten by someone who was just better and I've just got to take that on the chin and move forward for outdoors."

However, he added: "I hadn't won a major medal so it was important to get that started. We're not there yet but we're getting there."

NORWAY
SPAR
INGEBRIGTSEN
ISTANBUL 2023
12
SPAR
GOURLEY
ISTANBUL 2023

ISTANBUL MEDALLISTS: **MEN**

60M
① Samuele Ceccarelli ITA 6.48
② Marcell Jacobs ITA 6.50
③ Henrik Larsson SWE 6.53 NR

400M
① Karsten Warholm NOR 45.35
② Julien Watrin BEL 45.44 NR
③ Carl Bengtstrom SWE 45.77

800M
① Adrian Ben ESP 1:47.34
② Benjamin Robert FRA 1:47.34
③ Eliott Crestan BEL 1:47.65

1500M
① Jakob Ingebrigtsen NOR 3:33.95 CR
② Neil Gourley GBR 3:34.23
③ Azeddine Habz FRA 3:35.39

3000M
① Jakob Ingebrigtsen NOR 7:40.32 NR
② Adel Mechaal ESP 7:41.75
③ Elzan Bibic SRB 7:44.03

60M HURDLES
① Jason Joseph SUI 7.41
② Jakub Szymanski POL 7.56
③ Just Kwaou-Mathey FRA 7.59

HIGH JUMP
① Douwe Amels NED 2.31m =NR
② Andriy Protsenko UKR 2.29m
③ Thomas Carmoy BEL 2.29m

POLE VAULT
① Sondre Guttormsen NOR 5.80m
② Emmanouil Karalis (GRE)
② Piotr Lisek (POL) 5.80m *(Joint silver)*

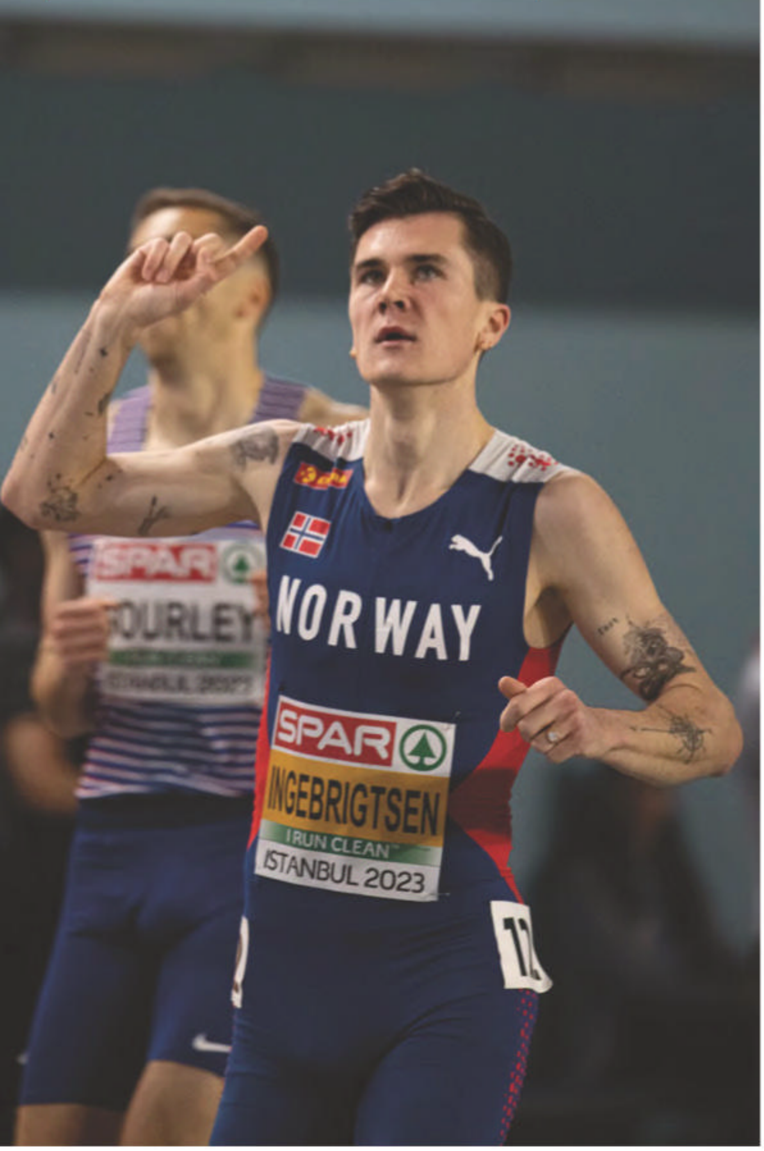
LONG JUMP
① Miltiadis Tentoglou GRE 8.30m
② Thobias Montler SWE 8.19m
③ Gabriel Bitan ROU 8.00m

TRIPLE JUMP
① Pedro Pichardo POR 17.60m
② Nikolaos Andrikopoulos GRE 16.58m
③ Max Hess GER 16.57m

SHOT PUT
① Zane Weir ITA 22.06m NR
② Tomas Stanek CZE 21.90m
③ Roman Kokoshko UKR 21.84m NR

HEPTATHLON
① Kevin Mayer FRA 6348
② Sander Skotheim NOR 6318 NR
③ Risto Lillemets EST 6079

4X400M RELAY
① Belgium 3:05.83
② France 3:06.52
③ Netherlands 3:06.59



INGEBRIGTSEN IMPREGNABLE

While there was a clear and present danger to Ingebrigtsen in the 1500m, the Norwegian looked to be in much more control as he completed the double double by also retaining his 3000m title. Just ask Spain's Adel Mechaal, who finished a distant second.

Ingebrigtsen's winning time of 7:40.32 was a Norwegian record, even though he looked like he was cruising. Everyone else was struggling behind him, though, as he spent most of the race controlling the pace from the front.

"It was a feeling like I raced myself," he said. "Maybe it was expected. I would love to get some more competitions but maybe that is just me, expecting too much."

If Ingebrigtsen's confidence levels were dented at all by losing the world 1500m title to Jake Wightman, it doesn't seem to be showing!

BRILLIANT BOL

Femke Bol's astonishing record in European competition continues. After winning European indoor 400m and 4x400m relay gold two years ago, the new world record-holder repeated the feat again, also adding to the three outdoor golds – 400m, 400m hurdles and 4x400m relay – she won in Munich last summer.

She has run under 50 seconds for 400m three times indoors this winter, including that historic mark of 49.26 and the 49.85 which won her the two-lap title in Istanbul.

Her indoor season finished with a flourish, too, as Bol recorded the fastest split from the Dutch team with 49.58 as the quartet stormed to a championships record of 3:25.66, bettering their own mark from Torun of 3:27.15.

"I achieved everything I wanted this season, could not ask for more," said the 400m hurdles specialist. "But it is just an indoor season and I miss my hurdles.

"I'm glad we managed to defend our titles and we also have next medals so it was amazing. See you in Budapest, we will be there."

SPAR
EUROPEAN ATHLETICS
ISTANBUL 2023

CRAZY KARSTEN

If Femke Bol was serenity personified on the track, then Karsten Warholm's approach to winning 400m European indoor gold was rather different.

The Olympic 400m hurdles champion and world record-holder is something of a force of nature and he exploded around the opening lap, covering the 200m in a near-suicidal time of 20.84. He held on to win, but it looked painful as he ran his second 200m in 24.51 as Julien Watrin almost caught him on the line after running a Belgian record of 45.44 for silver.

"It was stupid but it's me wanting probably a bit too much," admitted Warholm. "But that's also the athlete who has got me to where I am today. I'm glad I got away with the gold medal. I gave it probably a little bit too much but it's the way I am and that's how I do it. I'm not disappointed with that. It's me trying and testing things."

JACOBS' DOMESTIC THREAT

Marcell Jacobs doesn't just have global threats on his horizon as he plots a route towards being the fastest man in the world again – he now has a domestic force to be reckoned with, too.

Samuele Ceccarelli had beaten the Olympic 100m champion at the Italian indoor championships and the little-known 23-year-old repeated the feat on the European stage as he scorched to a 6.48 victory ahead of Jacobs' 6.50.

Blasting out of the blocks, Ceccarelli proved impossible to catch as he sped to gold. It will be interesting to see this summer if he can improve his modest outdoor PBs of 10.45 for 100m and 21.60 for 200m.

To beat Jacobs is some accomplishment as well, given that in addition to winning gold in Tokyo in 2021 he is the reigning world indoor champion and European 60m record-holder with 6.41. Jacobs was however struggling with a hamstring injury and his legs were covered in kinesio tape.

"I am over the moon because it is my first time in the Italian senior team, my first time competing at such championships, and the first win," said Ceccarelli. "He [Jacobs] was happy for me. We kept the gold medal at home in Italy. He is like my big brother."

ITALIA
SPAR
JACOBS
I RUN CLEAN
ISTANBUL 2023

A BACKDROP OF TRAGEDY

The tragedy of the recent earthquakes in Turkey and Syria was never far from the thoughts of those watching and competing at the Ataköy Arena. With athletes signing a wall of support, wearing black ribbons and a number of fundraising projects in evidence throughout the championships, there was a particularly poignant backdrop to events on the track and in the field.

Questions had been asked as to whether or not the event should have gone ahead at all but the home athletes were united in feeling it was right that the show had to go on.

The golden moment for the host nation came for Tugba Danismaz in the triple jump, when she leapt to a national record of 14.31m and top spot.

"We are going through a very tough time and if people are happy because of my medal and they are healing their wounds because of the medals, that makes me very happy and proud," she said. "The spectators were so great and if I made them smile, that is very good.

"I have so many foreign friends who sent me messages and supported me, so I am happy we are not alone."

Distance runner Emine Hatun Mechaal shared a similar view. She was overcome with emotion after qualifying for the women's 3000m final, in which she ultimately finished 13th.

Mechaal lost friends and relatives in the earthquake disaster, but despite struggling with heartbreak and missed training, she chose to compete.

"This was so important to me," she told *AW*. "It was important for people to see their flag in the final. I am here for them and I am standing for them."

The 27-year-old special education teacher wore a black ribbon on her singlet and added: "I am feeling so sad but I am running for my city [Antakya in the Hatay Province].

"I know 50 people who have died – my cousins, my neighbours, my friends. Many of them we don't know if they have died or are in hospitals."

Hatay was one of the worst areas hit by the earthquake, which is thought to have affected around 14 million people as it struck southern and central parts of Turkey and also Syria.

"My preparation was going so well until February 6," she said. "Then when I learned what had happened in 11 cities, one of which was my own city, it was not a good moment. I lost a lot of my shape.

"I was so worried about my family and what was happening there. They were living on the streets and I could not concentrate on anything else. Finally I moved my family to a safer place and I began to find a little rhythm again."

SPAR
DANISMAZ
I RUN CLEAN
ISTANBUL 2023

TWO GREAT SCOTS

It's 30 years since Yvonne Murray and Tom McKean swept to gold at the World Indoor Championships in Toronto. **Steve Smythe** looks back on the careers of pair of top-class athletes who are perhaps underappreciated

While Scottish athletes are enjoying huge current success, it's worth noting that, 30 years ago this month, two competitors from north of the border won gold at the World Indoor Championships at the Toronto Superdome.

Yvonne Murray and Tom McKean, both coached by Tommy Boyle, also enjoyed European indoor and outdoor successes. They deserve to be remembered for more than just their Canadian victories, however, and are surely two of the most underrated UK greats.

Yvonne Murray

While Murray's world indoor title victory could barely have been more clear cut, it was achieved through a lot of hard graft.

USA's world cross-country champion Liz Jennings led most of the opening kilometre in a slow 3:02.98 before the Scot kicked in a 32.30 200m, at which point the race was effectively over as no one was willing or able to chase.

A lap later the lead was six seconds and, as she completed a second kilometre (2:48) at well inside world record pace to pass 2000m in 5:51.94, the gap had moved out to 16 seconds – almost half a lap ahead.

Surges from Romania's Margareta Keszeg (9:02.89) and Jennings (9:03.78) reduced the margin slightly but Murray still had a 12-second winning margin as she hit the line in a time of 8:50.55.

Her first major medal, when she was coached by hammer thrower Bill Gentleman, had come at the age of 20 in the 1985 European Indoors (third with 9:00.94) and advanced the following year (second in 9:01.31) but far more significant runs came outdoors.

mita 267 TORONTO '93
mita 110 TORONTO '93
CHILE
mita 51 TORONTO '93

ABOVE: Yvonne Murray was a commanding winner in Toronto

At the 1986 Commonwealth Games, Murray won 3000m bronze in a PB 8:55.32 which she improved to 8:49.56 in the heats of the European Championships that year and then produced a brilliant 8:37.15 in the final to take a shock bronze ahead of Zola Budd (8:38.20) and future world and Olympic champion Tatyana Samolenko (8:40.35).

The indoor progression continued as she won European gold in 1987 in a championships record and indoor PB 8:46.06 ahead of future world champion and world record-holder Elly Van Hulst. The outdoor season did not go so well but, in 1988, Murray was a delighted third behind Samolenko (now Dorovskikh) and Paula Ivan in a PB of 8:29.02 at the Seoul Olympics.

Her 1989 highlight was an easy win in the World Cup 3000m (8:44.32), while she went on to finish a close second a few months later at the 1990 Commonwealth Games in Auckland (8:39.46) but just missed a 1500m medal, coming fourth.

Later that summer came arguably Murray's greatest ever victory, when she won the 1990 European title in Split.

A young Sonia O'Sullivan was ahead, approaching the 2000m mark in 5:59.14 and Murray put in an astonishing burst 550m from the finish (covering the section from 600m to 200m to go in 60 seconds) and though she lost some of the lead in the straight she won in 8:43.08, five metres up on Soviet Yelena Romanova (8:43.68).

That same form didn't materialise between 1991 and 1993 in the outdoor global championships, when medal challenges had been expected.

That wasn't the end for Murray, though. In 1994 she first came second behind O'Sullivan to complete her European 3000m medal collection (8:36.48) before her first top class 10,000m where she won Commonwealth gold in a PB 31:56.97 with a fast last 500m. An easy 3000m World Cup win in London followed.

A brilliant 10,000m career looked to be on the cards but, after easing through her World Championships heat in Gothenburg in 1995, she fell heavily in the final and ultimately had to drop out. Though Murray produced some good road performances, she never really reached the same high standard again.

VIEW FROM
mita
110
TORONTO '93
VIEW FROM

MAJOR EVENT RECORD

- 1 world indoor gold
- 1 Olympic bronze
- 3 European outdoor medals (1 gold)
- 3 European indoor medals (1 gold)
- 3 Commonwealth medals (1 gold)
- 2 World Cup wins
- 4 World outdoor finals

PBs: 800m: 2:00.80; 1500m 4:01.20; 2000m: 5:26.93; 3000m: 8:29.02; 5000m: 14:56.94; 10,000m: 31:56.97; 10M: 53:50

BRASIL
SNICKERS
63
TORONTO '93
SNICKERS
211
TORONTO '93

Tom McKean

Given his change of pace and talent, the "Bellshill Bullet" had a poor global outdoor championships record, with a best of eighth from the five championships between 1987 and 1995.

However, with a world indoor title, European outdoor gold (and silver), two Commonwealth silvers (one in a relay), a European indoor gold, a World Cup and four European Cup victories, his record over 800m – World and Olympics aside – is amongst the best of any British runner at the event.

Like Murray, his global title came in Toronto and he controlled the race throughout. Leading through 200m in 24.9, 400m in 51.89 and 600m in 79.82, he won by three metres in 1:47.29 from Burundi's Charles Nkazamyampi as former champion Jose Luis Barbosa of Brazil fell and dropped out.

McKean's best year had come in 1990. Though it began badly with seventh place at the Commonwealth Games, he first won the European indoor title in Glasgow in front of a fervent home crowd. Again, he led all the way and was ahead at 400m in 53.35 before destroying the field on the last lap to win by exactly a second in an impressive 1:46.22.

The outdoor European Championships went even better, where he produced one of the greatest ever British two-lap performance in terms of its control and dominance.

McKean pushed ahead after 200m and led at 400m in a quick 51.31. Though the rest of the field were queueing up behind him at 600m and on the final bend, he changed pace dramatically to win in 1:44.76, with team-mate David Sharpe finishing fast to snatch silver in 1:45.59.

Perhaps the most memorable moment of McKean's career came at the European Championships four years earlier in Stuttgart, however. In a race which was described as "three Spitfires coming out of the sun", there was a British one-two-three.

Just a few weeks previously, in the Commonwealth 800m final, McKean had made no attempt to match Steve Cram, who won in a Games record 1:43.22 from the Scot's PB 1:44.80 and Peter Elliott (1:45.42).

But, in a superb race in Germany, McKean held off Cram (1:44.88) as he improved his PB to 1:44.61. However, he couldn't stop Seb Coe's late rush to the title in 1:44.50.

The global races didn't go so well, including a disqualification for pushing at the 1988 Olympics and last places in the 1987 and 1993 World finals. In 1987 he had caught the foot of a competitor and injured himself while, at the 1991 World Championships, when again he was one of the favourites, McKean eased up prematurely in his heat and failed to qualify.

He had enjoyed a breakthrough year in 1985 with fast-finishing tactical victories in both the UK Championships (1:49.12) and the European Cup in Moscow on his international debut (1:49.11).

In a match situation with no pacemakers, McKean was in his element, and he won the next three European Cups in 1987, 1989 and 1991 in 1:45.96, 1:46.94 and 1:45.60.

Additionally, when Britain competed at the World Cup for the first time as an individual nation in Barcelona in 1989, he again won in 1:44.95.

His fastest, and arguably his best, race came at Crystal Palace in an international against Germany and Kenya. Up against the Olympic champion Paul Ereng, he sprinted past the Kenyan along the straight to win in 1:43.88. It's a race worth catching on *YouTube* with Steve Ovett commentary and proves that, on his day, McKean could beat anyone.

IEW
ROM
British Athletics

MAJOR EVENT RECORD:
- 1 world indoor gold
- 1 European indoor gold
- 2 European outdoor medals (1 gold)
- 2 Commonwealth medals
- 1 World Cup wins
- 4 European Cup wins
- 2 World outdoor finals

PBs: 800m: 1:43.88; 1000m: 2:18.91

CAPTAIN FANTASTIC

Over the next 24 pages, we explore how the mental side of sport plays such a crucial role. We start with a gold medal-winning moment from Jazmin Sawyers which proved just how powerful a change in mindset can be

WORDS: **JASON HENDERSON** AND **EUAN CRUMLEY**

Jazmin Sawyers will always have Istanbul. The first golden moment of the long jumper's career was, however, forged in Munich.

Sawyers had arrived at last year's European Championships despondent and kicking herself at an opportunity which she felt had been missed just a handful of days earlier at the Commonwealth Games, where she had come fourth in front of a Birmingham crowd which was doing its level best to roar her on to the podium.

It had taken a lot of effort to drag herself off the canvas. While it hadn't been a knockout blow, the 28-year-old travelled to Germany feeling like she was on the ropes.

Despite her best efforts, there had been no medal-winning moments for six years. The doubts weren't so much creeping in as staging a full-scale assault.

"When it's been that long you start to doubt you can do it," she said last summer. "Even though I'd seen the signs and I'd been jumping well, you start to wonder 'can I still produce the goods?'"

Yet Sawyers "loves a championships" and, as she took her mark in the Munich Olympic stadium for her sixth and final jump, something changed. The belief came back.

A jump of 6.80m moved her into the bronze medal spot – a position in which she would stay.

"Munich proved to me that I could get back on the podium and also shifted my mindset," she said. "I had always said prior to Munich that I was the sort of person that hated losing more than winning, and that feeling of making the podium in Munich was better than anything I'd ever experienced. That feeling has spurred me on."

It's a feeling which also put her in a different frame of mind at the European Indoor Championships – and not just because she had was captain of the British team. It took one jump, of 6.71m, "well ▷

GREAT BRITAIN
SPAR
SAWYERS
I RUN CLEAN
MUNICH 2022

ABOVE: Jazmin Sawyers winning bronze in Munich proved to be a pivotal moment

within myself" to qualify for the final. This time Sawyers wasn't just competing for *a* prize. She wanted the *top* prize. And she got it. The first major senior title of her career.

While that in itself might not have been entirely expected, jumping a world leading British indoor record of 7.00m to take the victory was perhaps even more surprising.

The Stoke athlete beat Larissa Iapichino of Italy by three centimetres, with Ivana Vuleta of Serbia third with 6.91m and Mailaka Mihambo of Germany fourth with 6.83m.

This was not a soft competition, either. Mihambo is the reigning Olympic and world champion; Vuleta is a two-time world indoor and three-time European indoor gold medallist; while Iapichino is the daughter of former English Schools and two-time world champion Fiona May and the 20-year-old jumped an Italian record for silver.

Plus, as Sawyers admitted, seven metres is serious long jumping. Indeed, the only Brits who have ever jumped further outdoors are Shara Proctor with 7.07m and Lorraine Ugen with 7.05m.

"Seven metres is the goal for most female long jumpers," said Sawyers. "You look at it like it's a line to cross. I've been looking for this seven-metre jump for what feels like forever. I was pretty shocked. I wasn't expecting it but I've also been expecting it for years. It almost doesn't quite feel real. It feels like all the belief that I had in myself was justified. I have proved my younger self right.

"I'm so proud of myself and I'm so happy to also prove the people that believed in me right because there were a lot of people that didn't."

Mental strength has been vital. Bravery has been important, too.

How did Sawyers do it? For starters this was a magnificent medal moment waiting to happen. Apart from a brief foray into bobsleigh – plus a singing appearance on *The Voice* six years ago – Sawyers has been charging down the runway and landing into sand for many years and has turned into one of Britain's most reliable and consistent elite performers.

As well as that Munich bronze, she has also finished eighth at the last two Olympics.

The Aston Moore-coached athlete has also taken apart her technique this winter and tweaked it significantly. "I completely changed it this year. I was having an issue with over-rotation and I've been having it for years," she said. "And we tried to fix it by having me sort of stop in the air as I take off.

"But that's so hard and then to pause so instead we added an extra hitch so I'm doing a two-and-a-half hitch which is not a typical technique for women but it turns out it feels a lot more natural than

> IT FEELS LIKE ALL THE BELIEF THAT I HAD IN MYSELF WAS JUSTIFIED. I HAVE PROVED MY YOUNGER SELF RIGHT. I'M SO PROUD OF MYSELF

one-and-a-half ever did. I've been thinking about it and experimenting with it for a few years but this year we decided to really go for it."

Just as importantly, she added: "Things are just good. I'm happy. I'm enjoying training. I'm enjoying my group. I'm having a really nice time. I've always said that makes such a difference and it's working out really well for me."

Sawyers leapt 6.70m in the first round and then 6.76m in the fourth but it was the fifth where she produced the pyrotechnics with a 7.00m mark that seemed to take an age before it flashed up on the board.

By the sixth round she had sealed gold and leapt out to 6.84m before literally jumping for joy in front of the British fans who had travelled to the Ataköy Athletics Arena to support the team.

"This isn't the end of it," she added. "This is just the European Indoor Champs. We've got so much more to do in the next couple of years."

In the aftermath of that mind-altering jump in Munich, Sawyers said: "I think some people look at me and think 'you haven't got much more than that'. But I believe I have."

It turns out she was right. With a new technique and heading into the summer with a major goal already achieved, what can she do now with a gentle tailwind? Now that's an exciting thought. AW

BELOW: Sawyers reacts to her 7.00m long jump

GREAT BRITAIN
SAWYERS
PHOTO

Euan Crumley meets Marco Airale, the man who is guiding some of Britain's top sprinting talent through a mixture of precision and obsession

THE SCIENTIST

All Marco Airale needs to see is a flash. A glimpse of something he can work with. As far as he is concerned, if an athlete can do something once, then they can do it again. And again. He just needs to show them how.

The Italian splits coaches into one of two categories – artists and scientists. The man who is now guiding the careers of a number of Great Britain's top sprinting talents firmly classes himself as the latter. He needs facts and evidence. He argues that his athletes do, too.

His training group, which is based in the Italian city of Padova that lies around 25 miles west of Venice, now includes a high-profile quintet of athletes at very different stages of their careers.

There is the young gun in the form of 21-year-old Jeremiah Azu, then there's the more experienced pairing of Daryll Neita and Reece Prescod who are entering their peak years at 26 and 27 respectively.

Ama Pipi, also 27, a two-time national indoor 400m champion and part of Britain's bronze medal winning 4x400m relay team at last year's World Championships, is there too.

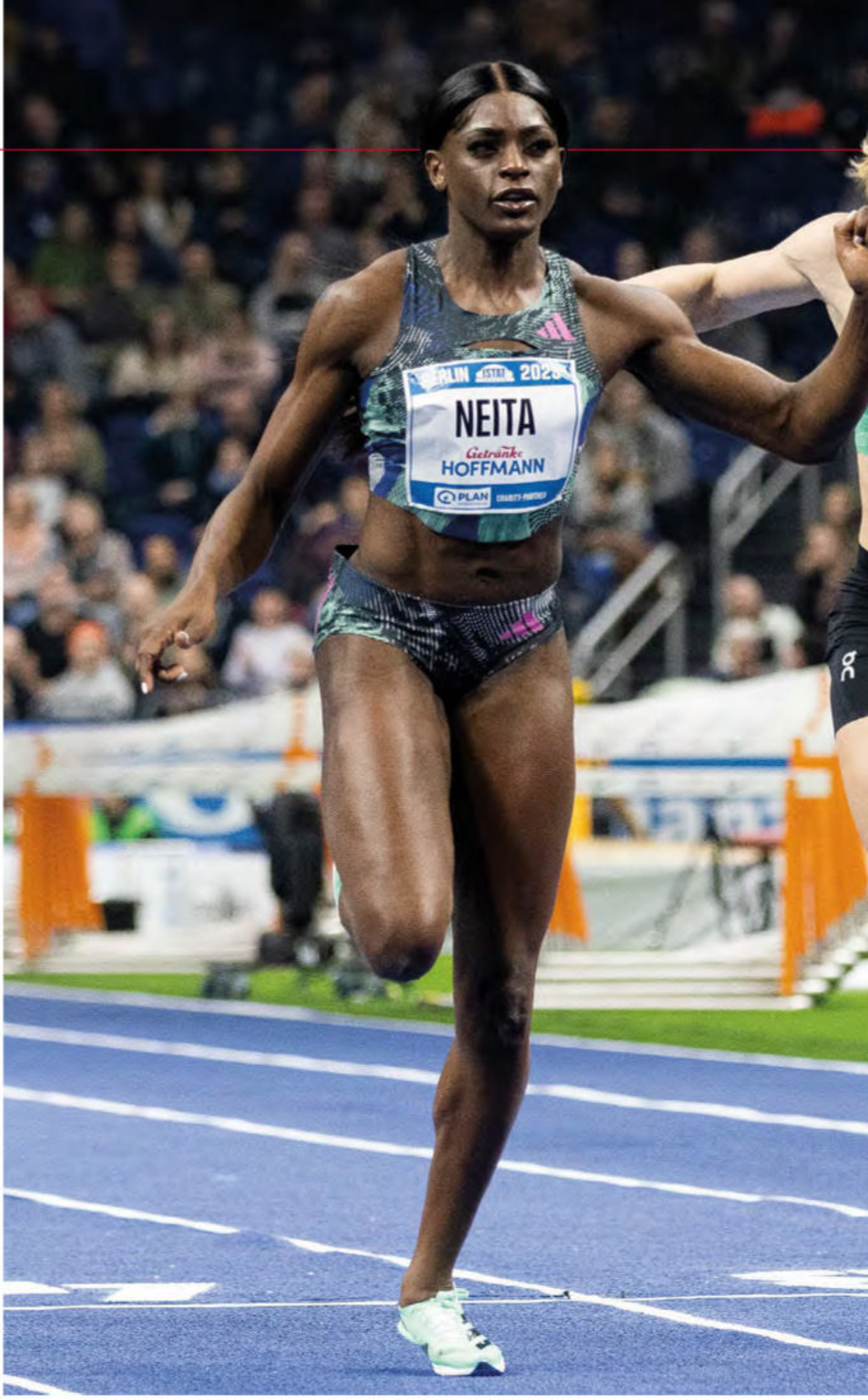
Then there's Adam Gemili, a three-time Olympian who has been round the track more times that he would perhaps care to admit. Invigorated under the guidance of Airale, the 29-year-old is building for one last hurrah after recent years of controversy surrounding his former coach Rana Reider.

All have shown that flash and the potential to excel, says Airale. His job is to bring the big performances out of them right when it matters.

It's a task he attacks with seemingly boundless energy. The Italian former multi-eventer, who is also a trained physio and osteopath who spent time working at the Juventus youth academy, is a particularly expressive individual. He is full of smiles and gestures, regularly jabbing the table with his index finger for emphasis during an animated chat with *AW* in a Birmingham hotel.

He was there to support his athletes at the World Indoor Tour Final at the end of an indoor season which has had a purpose to serve but is not the main goal for his charges. It has unearthed some gems, though – two in particular which give him further cause to get excited.

Neita has taken great strides forward in the past two years, consistently going under the 11-second mark for 100m and becoming British champion over 100m and 200m. She also took the national



> "WHAT MAKES THE DIFFERENCE IS THAT OBSESSION ALWAYS BEATS TALENT. YOU NEED TO BE OBSESSED WITH WHAT YOU DO, YOU NEED TO HAVE THE GRIT THAT IS PUSHING YOU TO EXPRESS THE MAXIMUM OF YOUR TALENT

BERLIN ISTAF 2023
BURGHARDT
Getränke HOFFMANN
PLAN
Allianz
ROSIUS
HERRERA ABREU

ABOVE: Daryll Neita's run of 7.05 provided a glimpse of what could be possible for the Briton

60m title during this indoor season during which she also landed European bronze.

However, the focus on this shortest of sprints has a much bigger target in mind and it was a performance away from the championships events which got Airale particularly animated.

“With Daryll when she ran 10.90, 10.95 and 10.97 she always went through the 60m point in 7.15-7.17 and her indoor 60m PB last year was 7.11 so she was not even able to replicate the 7.11 outdoors,” he explains. “So for me the goal for this year was getting consistency around 7.10 and maybe into 7.09.

“But then she went and ran 7.05 [at the ISTAF meeting in Berlin]. So if we can get consistency and she can go through 60m [in times under 7.10] ... do the maths, crazy times are going to come.

“When 7.05 came out and I put it down on my spreadsheet and saw the time that she can run I said: ‘Oh wow. This is something crazy’.

"We can go from being the best in the UK to one of the best in the world. This is a game changer.”

It’s a similar story for Prescod.

“With Reece everything is new,” adds Airale of the man who arrived last October with Azu and Gemili. “Last year he ran his PB of 9.83 in Ostrava and I knew his 60m PB was 6.53.

“We didn't work at all on his acceleration. We didn't work at all in the blocks. We didn’t even do any speedwork and then we started to time him in training. I thought then that he could run under 6.60. He started with a 6.60 in Manchester and then 6.59 in Gent. But then 6.49 in Berlin [after a 6.54 in the heat]? No, no, no!

“If, *if* by any chance Reece is able to go through 60m in 6.49 and Daryll is going to run 7.05 the time we are going to see next is mad.”

It’s a big if and this is the point where the mental side of the sport – and the hardwiring of technique – comes to the fore. Prescod had looked ready to be a key challenger at the European Indoors, but ▷

ABOVE: Marco Airale (centre) with (l to r) Reece Prescod, Jeremiah Azu, Adam Gemili and Daryll Neita

> "
>
> I SHOULD FEEL THE PRESSURE BUT I DON'T BECAUSE I KNOW THAT I CAN MAKE THEM BETTER. I NEED TO MAKE SURE THEY KNOW IT TOO

came eighth. Neita took bronze but had mixed feelings about the performance, knowing she was capable of more than her run of 7.12 in the final.

However, as Airale says: "Even if it's a flash and it's just one time? They can replicate it. They just need to know how to replicate it. And sometimes that takes time."

It also takes determination. How do you start to make your athletes believe?

"I think that this is really something that you need to have inside," says Airale. "I deal very well with athletes who, the same as me, have got grit. I've been reading a book called *Grit* and it says we always misjudge talent with reaching the top. How many talented athletes have we had that never reached the top?

"What makes the difference is that obsession always beats talent. You need to be obsessed with what you do, you need to have the grit that is pushing you to express the maximum of your talent.

"I'm really obsessed. When I was reading that book, which is supposed to teach you how to have grit, everything I was reading was how I'm normally dealing with track and field.

"You need to really commit because the way we work is hard. We've had some athletes in the past who have joined the group but they couldn't handle the pressure that some of the athletes in the group and myself put [on them] every day because for us every day we want to win.

"We've got no distractions and we are on track because we want to succeed. We are obsessed. It's sad sometimes but there is not a free moment where I'm not thinking about track and field. The ones who remain are the ones that really want to achieve the top."

Like many coaches, Airale has applied lessons learned from his own mentors with whom he has worked across the globe. His last high-profile posting was in the US assisting Reider, coach to Neita and Gemili at the time, through until the end of the Tokyo Olympics.

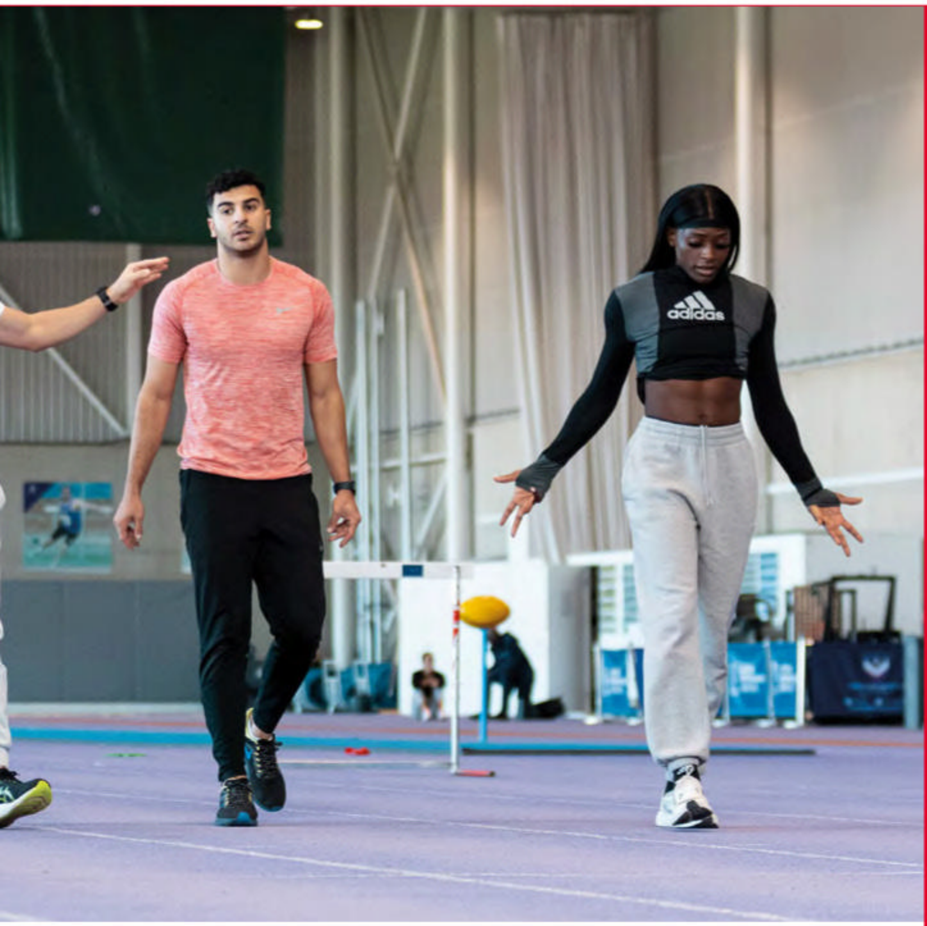
Airale's intention then had always been to return to Italy to start his own group. Little did he know that, with Reider having been placed under investigation due to allegations of sexual misconduct, he would be working with the British pairing again so soon.

Neita wasted little time in returning to Europe around 15 months ago, while Gemili stayed put under Reider until last autumn – a decision which raised questions and brought negative press, as well as a great deal of stress, to his door. Gemili insists he will properly explain his reasoning for doing so in future.

But what of the here and now? And what greeted him on arrival in Italy? Airale's coaching process is simple. To start with, he just wants to get the athlete fit. That involves stripping everything back to its parts.

"We do an assessment of the athlete – where they are lacking, the injuries they have had and at what point of the season they occurred," he says. "We take a screening of the things that are still going on, the balance they have in their bodies, and we prepare an individual routine that the athletes do every day before starting training so that they are ready.

"After that, basically the whole winter is just to make them fit and ready to run. A lot of tempo running, mainly aerobic, a lot of collateral work



on the body, core strength for the feet and ankle complex, the knees, the hips – the areas that are mainly affected in the events I'm going to coach. This is how I get them fit. Once I think they are fit, I think they can really express their talent. It's at that point that I can start modifying things."

Neita is much further along this process but this has been the first winter in which Airale has really been able to start the annual cycle with her from the beginning.

"Her coming to me was a game changer but it was also really hard because I was taking an athlete who had just run a PB," he admits. "It's the same with Reece and Jeremiah. They ran personal bests and then left [their previous coaching set-ups].

"I should feel the pressure but I don't because I know that I can make them better. I need to make sure that they know I can make them better – and that they are going to get better."

He adds: "I'm very strict. We are in a sport where hundredths of a second and sometimes milliseconds count. We need to be super precise in everything, starting from the small things. I really look at the detail and the small changes can make a difference in the big picture.

"These are super talented athletes. I defined Daryll as a supercar and I just put the oil where she needs it. In the big picture, they just need to execute with perfection and consistency, everything in the same running model. This is what we were working on." AW

What the athletes say about Marco

Adam Gemili

"I'm loving it and we have a fantastic group. I'm so glad I made the change. I wish I had done it a bit sooner. There's less stress on me and I'm able to focus on my running again.

"I basically quit the sport, I didn't have any interest, I didn't enjoy getting up for training. I hated it and that was because of all the stressful stuff that was going on.

"I'm finding that love again. I've been in the sport a long time and there's still a lot I want to achieve. We'll get to Paris and then after Paris we'll reassess.

"Coach Marco runs us hard but we have a good time doing it. Marco has a fantastic knowledge of the sport and, even at my age, I'm always learning. We changed everything. If you want different results, you've got to look to change stuff. You have seen Daryll absolutely flying, so it's working."

Daryll Neita

"It's amazing working with a coach I can trust and I feel like we have the same goals. I don't have to make any more moves now. I can just be settled in one place and I'm also enjoying Italy."

Reece Prescod

"We train hard, six days a week. We don't mess about. He's very technical and very strict about everything. He stripped me apart completely and now we're working on some new things. So far, so good but there are so many more things to achieve.

"Sometimes you've got to start again. I know my talent's there and the potential's there but it's now about fulfilling that potential."

A question of BALANCE

There's nothing wrong with giving it everything, writes **Verity Ockenden**, but it can be damaging to pursue big goals without making sure you're keeping on an even emotional keel

There were times when I wouldn't have watched the British Championships. In 2018, determined to better my fourth-place finish from the previous year, I stubbornly refused to acknowledge the piercing ache of a tibia that fractured a little more with each step, until I could no longer walk. Only then did I sit tail down in the dirt and scream in the realisation that I could no longer hope to compete there. I cross-trained angrily until everything else hurt, too, and often bit the hand that offered consoling cups of tea.

When the big day came, that same hand hovered hesitantly over the remote. My mother had become such a fan of the sport through her years of supporting me, that she still wanted to watch it in my absence. I feigned indifference, but as snippets of commentary drifted upstairs and "Gold! Silver! Bronze!" were each assigned to names not mine, the envy stung more than lactic itself.

I always knew that this kind of behaviour was unhelpful, as well as unhealthy, and I berated myself all the more for it. It was childish, unprofessional and got in the way of the real work I needed to be doing.

Acknowledging the feelings helped, but it would take a few more headlong dives of the rollercoaster until I really learned how to react to the ups and downs of the ride, without giving myself emotional whiplash.

In 2021 I won the British indoor selection trial for the European Championships. Due to Coronavirus, it was probably the only year in history that the trial was not titled the British Championships. I was not crowned anything for my achievement, took home no glinting memento. It was to be the Forgotten Championships.

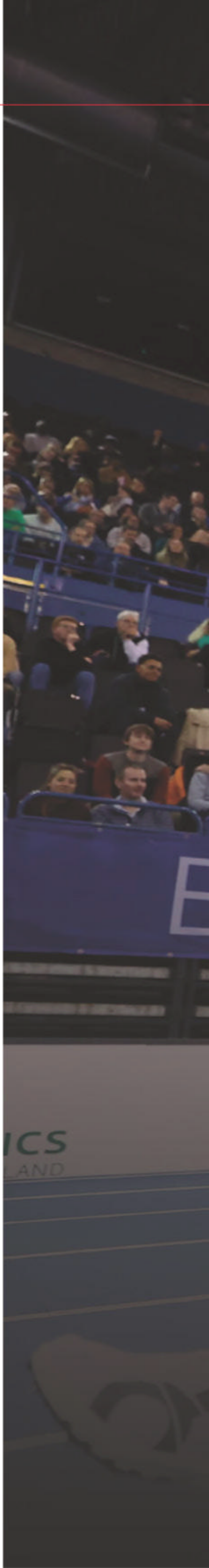
I didn't care too much. There was little time spare for thinking before the Europeans I had qualified for were upon us. The bronze medal I won at those was finally proof that I was good enough. Good enough to go to the Olympics, perhaps, if I gave it everything.

Giving it everything meant overriding my emotions. It meant staying up a mountain in Arizona while my father underwent surgery halfway across the world. It meant not sparing a second to process the break-up that had happened the day after my qualification to the Europeans. It meant not crying when our dog died and I wasn't there to say goodbye. It meant declining invitations despite desperately missing my friends and family.

I did all of that, as do many others in this business; we have workouts to get done instead. So when, by a hair, I didn't make the Olympic team, once again I found it difficult to watch each lap of that Tokyo track unfold with anything more than embittered apathy.

I didn't want only to see it, I wanted to experience it. I wanted something worth all of the sacrifices I had made. Instead, I was left not only with the sadness of this particular failure but the accumulated sadness of everything else I had brushed aside for it.

Still high on the adrenaline of it all, I crushed my post-trials workout with surprising ease, showing that, physically, I was still peaking. The following week, however, my disappointment began to get the better of me. My whole body recoiled in self-disgust the next time I set foot on the track, my training partner softly coaxing me through each dull rep as the suffocating lump in my throat grew. It got worse with every run, until I had to stop training completely. Weeks passed until I wanted to run again. ▷



MARKOVC
BIRMINGHAM
8
BRITIS
ATH
TICS
scotti
letics

Verity Ockenden had to watch the women's 3000m at the British Indoors unfold from afar, rather than being in the thick of the action

> "
> YOU CAN'T HANG EVERYTHING ON THE HIGHS WITHOUT EQUIPPING YOURSELF TO WEATHER THE LOWS

ABOVE: Verity Ockenden came close to qualifying for the Olympics in 2021

RIGHT: Ockenden with her medal at the European Indoors

> "
>
> **WE OFTEN FEEL MOST HOPELESS WHEN WE FEEL THERE IS NOTHING WE CAN DO ABOUT A SITUATION, WHEN WE FEEL OUT OF CONTROL, BUT THERE IS NEVER NOTHING YOU CAN DO**

When I finally felt capable of working towards a new goal, I learned a hard lesson from that experience. While my obsessive focus had succeeded in making me the fastest I've ever been in the short-term, the catastrophic outpouring of emotion I had saved up until failure had drained me so wholly both physically and mentally that it took far longer than expected to get going again.

I had put myself on the back foot in terms of my approach to my long-term goals. I watched other elite athletes who didn't make it pour their heartbreak into other races instead, enjoy a short and sunny holiday, and then pick straight up where they left off. I wanted to develop that same ability to process, let go and move on; without burying, without dwelling.

In the end I decided, it is a question of balance, of keeping "an even keel" as 800m star Keely Hodgkinson describes it. You can't hang everything on the highs without equipping yourself to weather the lows. Living it all with too much emotion or alternatively attempting to suppress feelings completely can both cause their own kind of problems. Much like working out and racing, however, you have to have found your tipping point in order to know where it is. That's where I forgive myself for all my past mistakes.

This year, yet again I was not present at the British (Indoor) Championships. I'm still making a steady return to full training after December's spat with sciatica. The 3000m final that I would have been in, had I accepted my invitation, fell on a Sunday, and that morning I woke with the intention that I had primed for myself the evening prior.

Soaked oats and coffee waited in the kitchen, while my fully charged GPS blinked expectantly atop my backpack. I was looking forward to spending the afternoon watching the champs unfold, with battered legs elevated and protein-laden snacks close at hand. Finally, my laptop balanced atop my compression boots, I was also able to find balance in my approach to spectating the events I would rather have been competing at.

For the first time, sated by my stacked weeks of successful rehabilitation and small but important victories, I was not jealous. I felt confident in the choices I had made, the work I had done, and the feel of each stride finding itself surer than the last. I had consciously educated myself more than ever about my body and the purpose of each training exercise. I had taken an invested responsibility in everything I did.

The era of my "just do what you're told" mentality was over, and so was the era of not knowing what to do or how to behave when I could not be doing that. We often feel most hopeless when we feel there is nothing we can do about a situation, when we feel out of control, but there is never nothing you can do. As 1500m mastermind Jake Wightman recently shared of his approach to injury, what you can do in these moments is not only wait, but have the "ability to keep a good attitude while waiting".

BRITISH ATHLETICS
SPAR
EUROPEAN ATHLETICS
TORUŃ 2021

With this in mind this time around, I chose to see the championship live stream as an enjoyable learning opportunity. How could I ever have allowed my emotions to get in the way of that so often before? Yes, the honing of my craft is mostly achieved in the doing of these races and in the doing of the training that gets me to the start line, but so many medals are won not by the swiftest athlete on the day, but the smartest.

Knowing your craft means knowing your competitors' strengths, weaknesses, tells and tendencies and knowing the ins and outs of every tactical move in the book. With this in mind, when I sat down on Sunday, emotion was replaced with action. I no longer felt that I was uselessly sitting this one out. My spectatorship now had a purpose as a part of my own journey, becoming an entertaining form of homework.

This is another meaningful micro-victory (a term I picked up from listening to Jazmin Sawyers' *Instagram* debriefs) for me, and I'm proud of it. Energy is a finite commodity that all athletes must ration wisely, and I'm no longer expending unnecessary amounts of it on emotions that don't serve me.

There will come a time when I'm back on a start line and I'll need all of that energy. Until then, I'm stacking up all the small moments of joy that keep me plodding along the way I need to.

>> Verity Ockenden is a British international athlete and European Indoor 3000m bronze medallist

STOP TRYING TO WIN

Chartered psychologist Dr Josephine Perry takes **Georgie Heath** through her approach and advice when it comes to helping athletes of every level

Dr Josephine Perry is a chartered psychologist who works with people in sports, business and on stage. She helps them overcome barriers to release that extra one per cent and achieve their goals. There's no secret around the importance of mindset and psychology in sports and the increasing value being placed on individuals, like Dr Perry, who are helping athletes unlock their potential. We caught up with her to discuss all things sports psychology, how to make changes and who or what stands in the way of success.

Facing choppy waters to discover the power of the mind

I used to be a triathlete and I went to Ironman in Melbourne in 2013. I was standing on the beach in front of the most enormous and terrifying waves. I'd seen waves but never anything like this.

The man on the tannoy said: "You can't control the waves but you can control how you feel about them." I'd done sport my whole life but this was the first time it had occurred to me that I could really use my brain. My body can sometimes be rubbish but my brain can be amazing. It was a real lightbulb moment and I got in those waves and did my best race ever. When I came back to the UK, I started to

research what really could be physically possible if you master your brain. I quit my job in the city, did a conversion course in psychology, a masters in sports psychology and then my three years' training. I've never looked back. I've seen it grow so much since then and more people are realising how important sports psychology is.

Personal factors for an athlete and what that means for their psychology

I see all ages, genders, and experiences. The main differences I see between amateur and professionals are the pressures they are dealing with and their motivations. Amateurs generally have intrinsic motivation, which is brought about by a sense of belonging. They feel like they fit in and get enjoyment from the activity – it's why running clubs are so popular. They have autonomy over what they do and are choosing to do it because they are competent and self-motivated.

Once you turn pro, you've got so many more pressures – the need to produce results and to get funding or sponsors mean it moves away from intrinsic to extrinsic. The pressures become very different and so does how you work. Anxiety can significantly increase. I've worked with professional athletes who have huge levels of performance anxiety which are then exaggerated by the need to perform well. This then works in a cycle that the anxiety is there which causes worse performance which causes more anxiety and continues to go round.

Coping with setbacks

It's the same process for amateur and professional. You can have two days to mope when you first get injured and can't do your normal activity. Then it's about getting to the physical root of what's causing the injury. Often the big fear is not knowing, so it helps to find the right experts to put your mind in the right place to cope with recovery. This is when I encourage athletes to stay social and make sure they are not alone. We work so much better when we are connected.

Then it's about goal-setting for recovery and establishing your timelines for getting back on track. Studies show that 70 per cent of people don't stick to their plans so staying connected makes you much more likely to. The other thing is finding things that are important to help keep your mind in check but also allow you some kind of stress relief. For some, being injured means they feel their lose their identity. "If I'm not a runner, who am I?" so this way they find further purpose and identity.

Regarding performance setbacks or plateaus, there can be so many different influences – RED-S, disordered eating, life stressors, distractions, overworking, family and many others. A lot of the work I do with athletes is around their values and purpose and what is really important to them – in their sport and beyond.

Even when they are not getting the results, it's about educating them that they can still input into their sport in a way that feels authentic. It's controlling what they can and knowing that they are approaching their training in a diligent way that feels good.

For amateurs, it's about finding their "why". If you don't like it, go and find something else. It's different for elite athletes because that "why" can go missing. It moves into being about money, motivation and discipline rather than the straightforward enjoyment.

They have to work hard constantly whereas an amateur can take the day off and get enjoyment from that without an impact on elite results and money. And that makes it hard if the support structure and methods aren't in place. ▷

asics
NEWHAM
UK ATHL
INDO
CHAMPION
BIR

The role of mainstream and social media

Coping with media in all forms depends on the athlete. Some find they don't feel an event has started until they've done the first press conference whereas others hate it and just want to get out there and compete. They see mainstream media as a necessary evil. Similarly, with social media, some thrive off it and need that interaction and feedback, especially where they might feel isolated on a training camp where they may not know anyone. It's important to make them feel connected.

The ones who cope best with it are those who have a plan in place – they know how to use it. They might plan to turn it off before, and during, the event to avoid unwelcome commentary (both amateur and professional) on their performance. Something like that can get in their head and start to feel personal. Comments from people at home can also be very intrusive.

For a few athletes, this criticism can give them a kick up the bum, but many say that those comments can really bother them. It's not necessarily trolling but it gets in their head and makes them question themselves. Athletes already have so much to cope with and then a faceless person on Instagram has their say and it can be really distracting. Obviously, there is so much more scope for people to have their say on social media, but an athlete should learn what works for them and what will reduce those negative effects. It comes with the territory of being an athlete and always pushing for that one per cent better. It means opinions may infiltrate their mind. It can be hugely distracting and negatively impact any performance. Managing it is key.

Stigma over seeking help

Athletes, and people in general, are getting much more aware over seeking help if something is holding them back. And that's fantastic. It should be celebrated that they are doing everything they can to gain that extra margin – not just in sport but in life, business and all areas. I adore when top athletes speak openly because it filters down and helps break stigmas. It's opened the door over coping with performance anxiety or other setbacks.

If they speak out, it makes a huge difference to others. You cannot perform at your best when you are anxious – it's physically not possible. So, speaking and seeking help is a way to combat that. I get youngsters coming to me saying they've heard a star talking about areas of difficulty and it helps them come forward and seek help. Simone Biles discussing her anxiety at the Tokyo Olympics was a huge game changer and really opened the gates for those conversations across all sports people at all levels.

The best piece of advice

Stop trying to win. When that's all you focus on, it makes failing a threat and when you feel under threat, you perform badly. Instead, try to be brilliant – your own brilliant. Focus on mastery and doing what you can to your best. That keeps you focused and, in turn, makes you more likely to win.

>> For more on Dr Josephine Perry and her work, visit: performanceinmind.co.uk

> "
>
> THE ONES WHO COPE BEST WITH SOCIAL MEDIA ARE THOSE WHO HAVE A PLAN IN PLACE – THEY KNOW HOW TO USE IT

KUDOS
SUTTON & DISTRICT ATHLETICS CLUB

98
GLS
PLAN INTERNATIONAL
2
GLS We deliver
GLS We deliver

PHOTO BY GETTY IMAGES

Older, slower, BETTER

Richard Askwith, author of a new book about running in later life, looks at what motivates ageing athletes to keep going – and finds that the high achievers of masters athletics deserve far greater recognition

I have been interested in running for much of my longish life: not just doing it but watching it and soaking up its rich traditions. Yet I was almost 60 before I discovered Ed Whitlock. I had never heard of Olga Kotelko, either, at that point; or of Earl Fee; or of a host of other giants of early 21st century track and field – multiple world record-holders and champions – whose golden athletic years coincided with my own period of greatest interest in the sport.

Why not? Because I wasn't watching. Year after year, athletes such as Charles Allie, Guido Müller, Nicole Alexis, Angela Copson, Gene Dykes, Caroline Powell, Clare Elms, Tommy Hughes, Yoko Nakono and Mariko Yugeta would push back the boundaries of human possibility. And year after year I missed them. ▷

ABOVE: Jo Pavey enjoyed great success in the latter part of her career

I wish I hadn't, but prejudice blinded me. They were the wrong age. I knew that masters athletics existed, but I assumed, as most people do, that it was a lacklustre affair: a sad, second-best niche for people who couldn't think of anything else to do when they grew too old for proper athletics.

Then I encountered the reality.

My journey of discovery began uncomfortably, four or five years ago, when a much less illustrious running career – my own – seemed to be grinding to a halt. I had been vaguely noticing for years that I was getting slower, but I hadn't given it much thought. Then, in my late fifties, my physical decline began to trouble me. I wasn't just slower and weaker. I was a shadow of the runner I used to be.

I had less bounce, less stride length, worse balance, less lung-power, less range of motion and much less resistance to injury. I seemed short of courage, too, or even basic enthusiasm. All the things that had once made me a moderately good runner were draining away.

Time passed and the cycle of decline reinforced itself. The lay-offs for injury grew longer, from each one I came back a little weaker and, as a result, more susceptible to other, seemingly random injuries.

"There isn't really a reason," said the physio who treated my torn calf. "It's just age."

My morning run, which for years I had thought of as my daily treat, began to feel like an ordeal. And what made it worse was that all this coincided (as it does for many runners) with a stage in life when there are all too many other reasons to think of yourself as being on life's scrapheap.

I'm sure I'm not the only middle-aged athlete to have sunk into something approaching a mid-life crisis as I wrestled with the miserable thought that my running days might be over. But then, much to my surprise, I found a way forward.

Surveys suggest that there are around 1.25 million regular runners in the UK who are over 40. Eighty per cent will stop running before they reach retirement age. That's not because they don't like running. It's just that the ageing process doesn't like runners. The older we get, the more of a struggle our sport becomes. Most of us end up admitting defeat.

But being an ex-runner isn't much fun either, so I resolved to find out what I could about the 20 per cent; and about the even smaller minority who continue to run, happily and healthily, until they are far into their seventies and eighties and, in a few cases, beyond.

My curiosity developed into a long, sprawling quest for the secrets of late-life running, which brought me into contact with a bewildering range

> **"**
>
> **NEVER MIND THAT I WAS A SHADOW OF THE RUNNER I USED TO BE. I WAS THINKING ABOUT THE RUNNER I HOPED TO BECOME**

of experts and enthusiasts – scientists, coaches, runners, medics – from many countries.

I spoke to champions and joggers, sprinters and distance runners, recent ex-Olympians and bright-eyed centenarian novices. Where possible I ran with them, too. Each offered their own special insights into how runners can overcome the challenges of later life, and their cumulative effect was to persuade me that I could overcome them too.

Eventually I tried to distil the most valuable lessons into a book: *The Race Against Time*. But the main thing they taught me can be stated in half a sentence: it's worth it. The gift of being a runner is too precious to be surrendered lightly.

As for practical details: runners thrive in later life for many reasons. Some are just lucky: unscathed by major injury or illness and, possibly, genetically predisposed to age slowly.

Some have been running all their lives; others barely ran at all before middle age; a few started later still. Many of the best were keen young runners who quit for a decade or two, then started again. What they all have in common is that, these days, they really have to work at it – because ageing, whoever you are, makes running harder.

Between the ages of 40 and 70 – to over-simplify a vast and complex field – we can expect to lose around a quarter of our lung power and muscle power. Maximal heart rate and VO2 max also decline precipitously; our sense of balance worsens; ligaments, tendons and bones become more fragile; joints lose their range of motion; and we struggle to absorb the nutrients we need. And that's before you factor in all the general, life-specific wear-and-tear that most of us accumulate as the decades go by. No wonder so many people chuck it in.

Yet things can be done to slow the physiological slide. For example: more resistance work, to counter muscle wastage; more balance work, to boost our deteriorating nervous systems; more recovery time; more focus on fuelling. Patience and persistence are required; so is thought. But that's what you sign up for when you decide that, as a runner, you're not going to take ageing lying down.

There's no point pretending it's easy. But, to repeat myself, it's worth it. You still deteriorate, but it's slower. And the simple rediscovery that you can still, through your own efforts, make a difference, making yourself a better runner than you would otherwise have been, can feel like a huge morale boost.

This is crucial, because age-related decline often reflects something else, too: the fact that, as we age, we stop believing. We're too old to run fast, we tell ourselves, so our training dwindles to half-hearted plodding. Even that doesn't protect us from post-training soreness, so we ease off further. We're too weak to run hard, we tell ourselves. We grow weaker still. And the weaker and more tentative we become, the more often we're injured.

But age-appropriate training allows us to take back a degree of control. We can't stop the clock but we can take responsibility, thinking about how to make things better rather than brooding on what we've lost. And once we reject self-pity, we tend to realise how much more we could easily be doing.

"Sometimes you think: 'I'm getting older – I can't run'," said Jo Pavey, 49-year-old age-group world record-holder for 10,000m (W35) and 5000m (W40) and five-time Olympian. "But if you think, 'Right, what training have I been doing in the last three months?' – maybe you haven't really done that much. So don't you think that if you were young you'd be running badly as well?"

Jo's advice inspired me to get back into speed training: proper, lung-busting, stomach-churning interval sessions like the ones I used to do when I was young. It felt strangely transgressive at first: surely it wasn't appropriate for a man in his early sixties to be pushing himself so visibly into such intense physical distress?

But the more I did it, the more I realised that, whatever my age, I was still the same runner I had always been: not especially good, but capable, if I tried, of improvement. And the more that sank in, and the harder I worked, the better I felt. I had developed a habit of looking back regretfully ("This used to be easier…", "I used to be faster…"), but now I was looking forward again. My sense of possibility had come back. Never mind that I was ▷

2:54·49
Scotiabank
Scotiabank TORONTO WATERFRONT MARATHON

a shadow of the runner I used to be. I was thinking about the runner I hoped to become.

This was a liberating breakthrough, because in recent years, I realised, I had been self-limiting: boxing myself in with self-fulfilling preconceptions about older runners being lesser runners, objects of pity or ridicule. Now I saw how absurd this was.

There is nothing "embarrassing" about being old and slow. Age is just one more challenge, one more arbitrary sporting handicap: invisible but no less real than a hurdle or a hill. It makes running tougher. It means that it takes you longer to cover a given distance. But it doesn't make the challenge less real or demanding, or less worthwhile. Running is running, whatever your age.

In this context, it is empowering to watch the elite of masters athletics. Their times are slower than the ones your read about on the sports pages, but they are no less extraordinary. The gap between what they can achieve on the track and what an ordinary, fit, keen recreational runner could achieve is still mind-boggling, and the stories of the superstars' struggles with the absolute limits of physical possibility are no less dramatic, and no less inspiring. When Ed Whitlock – a British-born Canadian who died in 2017 – first set his sights on becoming the first man over 70 to run a sub three-hour marathon, he described it as "the poor man's four-minute mile".

It was an apt comparison, because the seductively neat goal seemed at once tantalisingly attainable and, in practice, impossibly difficult.

Whitlock, who set dozens of other masters records, made several unsuccessful attempts before finally breaking through the three-hour barrier when he was 72; then broke it twice more. His second success – 2:54:48 when he was 73 – was described by the *New York Times* as "the greatest marathon ever run" once age had been taken into account.

They may have been right, and although a couple of others have now followed in Whitlock's footsteps (one of whom, 71-year-old Dutchman Jo Schoonbroodt, recently reduced Whitlock's iconic world record to 2:54:19), it is Whitlock's pioneering breakthrough that echoes through the ages, just as Roger Bannister's does.

ABOVE: Ed Whitlock broke marathon records

ABOVE LEFT: Angela Copson is a serlal record-breaker

> **ONCE YOU HAVE A SENSE OF HOW MUCH EXTRA DIFFICULTY EACH EXTRA YEAR IMPOSES AT DIFFERENT DISTANCES, YOU CAN APPRECIATE THE CHAMPIONS OF MASTERS FOR THE ATHLETIC GIANTS THEY ARE**

Meanwhile, the Irish runner Tommy Hughes has repeatedly come within seconds of becoming the first man over 60 to break 2:30 for the same distance, despite some terrible luck with coronavirus in the three years since his 60th birthday.

If he succeeds, as I believe he still could, he will also become the first person to have broken the two-and-a-half hour barrier in five consecutive decades, from his twenties to his sixties. The fact that Eliud Kipchoge could run a marathon nearly half-an-hour faster would not diminish such an achievement in any way. Both men are pushing at the furthest limits of what is physiologically possible, armed with once-in-a-generation talent, tireless and intelligent training, and a heroic capacity to endure pain. To value one but not the other would make no sense at all.

There are similar dramas, and similarly awe-inspiring achievements, in most masters age groups. You need to familiarise yourself with the norms and records for different ages – or better still have a go yourself. But once you have a sense of how much extra difficulty each extra year imposes at different distances, you can appreciate the champions of masters for the athletic giants they are.

Last year alone, a 35-year-old woman (Jamaica's Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce) ran 100m in 10.62; a 45-year-old man (Germany's Alexander Kosenkow) ran 200m in 21.65; a 45-year-old woman (Irish-born Australian Sinead Diver) ran a marathon in 2:21:34; a 52-year-old woman (Great Britain & Northern Ireland's Sally Cooke) ran 400m in 57.55; a 62-year-old woman (France's Nicole Alexis) ran 200m in 27.78 and 100m in 13.20; a 65-year-old man (Great Britain & Northern Ireland's Alastair Walker) ran 10km in 34:32; a 75-year-old woman (Great Britain & Northern Ireland's Angela Copson) ran 800m in 3:07.19, 1500m in 6:20.93 and 5000m in 22:53.55; an 80-year-old man (Japan's Katsutoshi Nakamura) ran 100m in 14.24; an 86-year-old woman (Great Britain & Northern Ireland's Anne Martin) ran a 2000m steeplechase – with 18 hurdles and five water-jumps – in 16:55.73; and a 90-year-old man (Australia's David Carr) did the same in 12:26.57.

The numbers may mean little if you don't follow masters. When you do, you realise that these are records as extreme as anything you might see at the Olympics – the only fundamental difference being that those who set them are rarely household names.

For ordinary recreational late-life runners like me, meanwhile, such exploits are as empowering as they are inspiring. We have no chance of emulating them, yet they give us permission to set our sights a little higher, fuelling our ambitions and giving focus to our low-level striving – just as the great Olympic moments did when we were young.

The achievements of the late-life elite also demonstrate an important truth: that the limits of athletic performance when you're past your prime lie much further back than conventional thinking suggests.

Growing older can easily rob us of our sense of possibility, as runners and as people. We become so accustomed to the sensations of physical decline – and to society's expectations of decline – that we stop believing in the possibility of improvement.

But speak to any keen masters athlete and they'll tell you that, whatever your age, you can, if you put your mind to it, make yourself a much better runner through dedicated, patient, age-appropriate training than you would be if you surrender to apathy or, at best, just carry on grimly doing the same old stuff.

Alan Carter, former M80 long hurdles world champion and current British 200m record-holder in his new age-group, M85, is a case in point. Growing up in London's East End, Alan was a decent club runner in his teens and twenties but "drifted away" in his early thirties because he didn't want to "embarrass" himself by becoming the oldest and slowest in the club. ▷

Two decades later, he discovered masters athletics, decided to have a go, and was shocked by how slow he was relative to the most experienced masters. So he started working hard – seriously hard – and slowly improved.

"My first 200m race, when I was 51, I did in 26.9. But when I was 55 I did 25.6." (Age alone should have added nearly a second to his time, so this is a bigger improvement than it seems.)

He went to his first world championships when he was 58 and he hoped that the next time he would get beyond the heats. But instead, in his early sixties, he found himself slowing down again. "I pushed myself harder and harder, but it just didn't happen. I'd be putting in more reps, over a longer period of time, feeling knackered, and going back the next day, and I'd come away thinking 'Ah, that's done me good!' And then I'd go and race, and I'd got slower."

The turning-point came in 2017, when Alan hoped to compete in the 400m at the world championships in Riccione, Italy. He had just turned 70, and he reckoned that, if he could break 70 seconds, he would stand a good chance of at least getting past the heats. Yet when he tested himself in an open race in Bedford a few months before the championships he felt so bad he could barely finish – and was horrified to record a time of 84 seconds.

Something had to change, fast. So he started reading a book his son had given him for Christmas: *The Complete Guide to Running: How to be a Champion from 9 to 90,* by the great Canadian Masters athlete, Earl Fee.

"It was life-changing." Oversimplifying only slightly, Alan boils down Fee's weighty volume to three sentences: "From about the age of 55, and certainly beyond 60, your body can't take the volume of training any more. But it can take intensity. So you stick with the intensity, but you reduce the volume."

In Alan's case, that meant having far more easy days than he was used to, and limiting his toughest track sessions to once a week. But those sessions really were tough. He started off doing two or three repetitions of 200m at sub-35 second speed – which in those days was well within his capability.

Then, each week, he would increase the distance of each rep by 20m, keeping the pace the same. That hurt, every time. But he could do it – just – and, week by week, the extra distance accumulated. Within 10 weeks he was up to 400m, and pretty much down to 70 seconds a time. He wasn't yet a world-beater, but in Riccione he made three finals, at 400m, 200m and long (300m) hurdles.

That boost to his confidence has been driving him ever since. He won his first British gold (in long hurdles) in 2009. In 2012, encouraged by his friend and coach Nick Lauder, he won his first European gold, as an M75. In 2013, at Porto Alegre in Brazil, he won his first world gold, also as an M75; and in 2018, in Malaga, Spain, he won another, this time as an M80. And now, as an M85, he is hoping to remain fit and injury-free long enough to win a few more golds, and perhaps too to set his first world record – completing an extraordinary journey from also-ran to world best that began at a time of life when many runners are preparing to hang up their running shoes for good.

GREAT
MASTERS
BRITAIN
EMACS
M80 1389
ALAN CARTER

PHOTO BY ALEX ROTAS

ABOVE: Alan Carter changed his training to get the best out of himself

> **"**
>
> **GO TO WATCH ANY MASTERS ATHLETICS MEETING – OR, IF YOU LIKE, COMPETE IN ONE – AND YOU'LL FIND IT HARD NOT TO BE SWEPT UP IN THE ATMOSPHERE OF ENTHUSIASM, EXUBERANCE AND WARMTH**

He has slowed down, obviously, and it has been a while since he last raced at 400m, let alone did so in fewer seconds than his age in years. But, even as an 85-year-old, he runs like a proper elite competitor. (I know: I've tried keeping up with him on the track.) And the British record he set last summer – 35.48 seconds for 200m – is impressive for an athlete whose main discipline is hurdling.

I'd be surprised if he came back empty-handed from this month's World Masters Athletics Indoor Championships in Toruń, Poland, where he's entered for the 200m (for which he topped the world rankings last year) and also hopes for a relay medal.

Whether or not he'll get much recognition for it is a different matter. Generally, masters champions don't. Yet I suspect that this may soon change, because attitudes are evolving. Running boomers like me are getting older in our thousands and encountering the harsh truths of ageing, and more and more of us are looking for ways to keep going. The examples of the great masters champions can help enormously with this: not because many of us will actually compete formally as masters ourselves but because, as Emil Zátopek observed long ago, runners need to run with dreams in their heads and hope in their hearts.

Older runners who achieve belief-defying things show us that running can still be a thrilling adventure, capable of producing spine-tingling moments of excitement, irrespective of the participants' age.

Most of us could never come remotely close to matching the masters elite, any more than we could have matched the Olympians when we were younger. But the achievements of the best give us permission to dream and hope again. And this helps us get back into the life-enhancing habit of working hard to improve ourselves; of attempting things that may turn out to be beyond us; and perhaps also of discovering, occasionally, that we have more to give than we thought.

Another great Czech runner, the pioneering veteran Karel Matzner (who was still competing a few months before his death, aged 92, in November 2021) thought that running's strange power to brighten the lives of those who do it was a key to the mystery of what keeps some runners going in later life. "A positive mental attitude helps you keep running," he told me. "And running helps you have a positive mental attitude."

Go to watch any masters athletics meeting – or, if you like, compete in one – and you'll find it hard not to be swept up in the atmosphere of enthusiasm, exuberance and warmth. This is strange: you'd expect older runners to enjoy their sport less than younger runners, what with all the extra aches and pains and the relentless disappointments of declining absolute performance. Yet the hopelessness of our shared struggle against age somehow redoubles the positivity that people bring to the sport: the admiration that we also-rans feel for the champions and the encouragement the champions extend to the rest of us. When it comes to getting older, runners, of whatever standard, are all in it together.

And as more and more runners discover this, an upsurge in interest in masters athletics would not be at all surprising. I wasn't the only recreational runner of my generation to be inspired in my twenties by the likes of Seb Coe, Steve Ovett and Steve Cram.

Why should I be the only one to be inspired today by the examples of Carter, Copson, Walker, Alexis and the rest? In both cases, it's a question of realising that perhaps you could make a little more of what talent you have; and, indeed, that you could make more of yourself and your life, simply by working to become the best runner you can possibly be. And that's as powerful a discovery when you're approaching retirement age as it is when you're just starting out in life.

The Race Against Time
Adventures in Late-Life Running
Richard Askwith

The Race Against Time: Adventures in Late-Life Running, by Richard Askwith, is published by Yellow Jersey Press (£18.99)

BATHURST BITES

Australia staged what turned out to be a truly memorable edition of the World Cross Country Championships

GOING FLAT OUT

A combination of the soaring temperatures and the brutal course pushed competitors to their very limits at Mount Panorama.

In the February issue of *AW*, two-time medallist Tim Hutchings outlined his understandable concerns around holding the World Cross Country Championships in Bathurst, during the height of an Australian summer.

While it is of course a global championships and the word of cross country does need to be spread far and wide, the worry was that the athletes who chose to compete would suffer badly in the hot conditions and that the only publicity surrounding the event would end up being only of the negative variety.

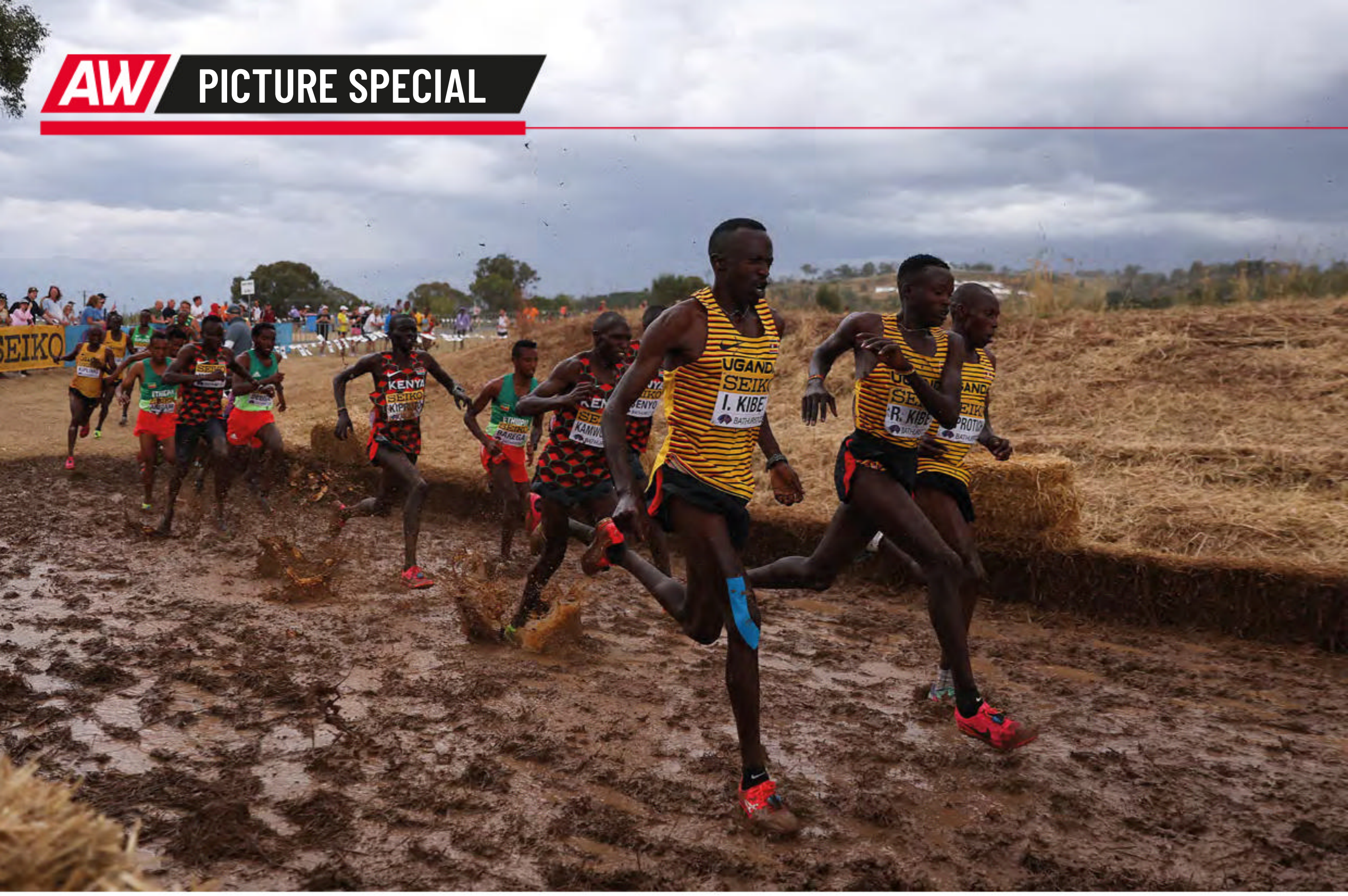
As it turned out, the going was indeed brutal for the athletes but a well thought out and very testing course around the Mount Panorama motor racing track which wound through vineyards, included a leg-sapping mud pit "billabong" and tyre chicanes proved to be the perfect platform for some amazing racing to play out.

From the mixed relay which continues to be a welcome addition to the programme, right through to the senior men's race which had to be brought forward due to a gathering storm, each contest provided compelling viewing for the crowds who came out in their number to watch.

UGANDA
SEIKO
KIPLIMO
BATHURST 23

THE GATHERING STORM

As if the prospect of the senior men's race itself was not intimidating enough, the Australian weather decided to add an extra dimension as an advancing storm forced the event to be brought forward. Uganda's Jacob Kilplimo (inset) was left competely undaunted, however, as he swept to a commanding victory.


SEIKO
KENYA
SEIKO
KIP
ETHIOPIA
SEIKO
BAREGA
KEN
SEIKO
KAMWO
KENYA
UGANDA
SEIKO
I. KIBE
BATHURST
UGANDA
SEIKO
R. KIBE
UGANDA
SEIKO
PROTIC

ETHIOPIA
ETHIOPIA
WE GROW ATHLETICS
GIDEY
BATHURST 23
CACTUS JACK

BATTLING "THE BILLABONG"

A purpose-built mudpit (top), billed as "the billabong" provided a strength-sapping test for the athletes. There were also some tyre chicanes which competitors could either weave their way through or, in some cases, hurdle.

WINDING THROUGH THE VINES

The Mount Panorama course also took competitors through vineyards (top right), but there was no time to stop and sample the local produce!

AUSTRALIA
ANETZKI
BATHURST 23
GRE
BRIT

HULL
BATHURST 23
ABERA

GIDEY IS LEFT FEELING GIDDY

With the senior women's title seemingly within her grasp, Ethiopia's Letesenbet Gidey legs gave way and she stumbled to the ground while leading and with the finishing line in sight. As Kenya's Beatrice Chebet profited and sped through to take victory, Gidey was helped back to her feet by two of her compatriots, but their assistance meant she was ultimately disqualified and cost the nation team gold.

HULL BRINGS HOME COMFORT

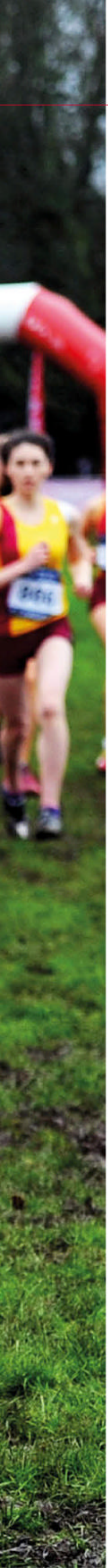
The host nation's one medal-winning moment came when they took bronze in the Mixed Relay. That was largely thanks to a brilliant leg from 1500m specialist Jessica Hull.

CHEBET'S CELEBRATIONS

Beatrice Chebet, the 2019 under-20 champion, savoured her golden moment in the senior women's race. Third-placed Agnes Ngetich joined her on the podium as Kenya dominated.

GIDEY
BATHURST 23

KENYA
WE GROW ATHLETICS
B. CHEBET
BATHURST 23



"I'M NOT GOING TO BE HAPPY JUST TO KEEP RACING, I'M GOING TO PUSH IT AS FAR AS I CAN"

After her promising career was stopped in its tracks for five years by glandular fever, Harriet Knowles-Jones is back and ready to make up for lost time. She tells **Katy Barden** about how her road to recovery

Harriet Knowles-Jones was an exceptional junior. A former European cross-country champion and European under-20 1500m bronze medallist (2017), she was also a finalist at the World Youth Championships (2015) and World Under-20 Championships (2016).

Her career as a senior was much anticipated, but after an unbeaten start to 2018 she was later diagnosed with glandular fever. Her first competitive race back came with a win at the Cheshire County Championships in January of this year.

Here, the 24-year-old Warrington AC athlete, who is coached by Paul Roden and Norman Poole, reveals what she's been through, how she's coped, and why she'll never stop pushing for more.

GETTING TO THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM

At first it was just a heavy cold. The only difference was that my glands were swollen and I didn't pick up on that. I couldn't do much for that week, but then I got back into it and I trained as I normally would. ▷

> "THIS WAS TIREDNESS OF A DIFFERENT KIND. I'D GO TO UNIVERSITY AND I'D HAVE TO PACK A DUVET IN THE BACK OF MY CAR SO I COULD SLEEP BETWEEN LECTURES

I trained for three months before I realised I wasn't getting anywhere. I could do a good session, but for the rest of the week I'd ache from head to toe. It was hard, because I've struggled with iron [deficiency] where you feel lethargic, but this was tiredness of a different kind. I'd go to university and I'd have to pack a duvet in the back of my car so I could sleep between lectures.

I think you can get a long way [as an athlete] if you work hard even when you feel bad, when you push through on the days you don't want to go outside. But I just got ill, kept training, and then it all got worse and worse. I was managing to run but I was sleeping a lot. Running was my priority, so I slept and I ran.

I had a number of blood tests to try and figure out what was wrong and why I'd hit a massive wall. I didn't think it was anything major at the start because it wasn't particularly bad, so I didn't really answer the right questions. When Dr Rodgers [Dr John Rodgers, Consultant in Sport and Exercise Medicine] asked me: "Were you ill and were your glands up?" that was when I got tested. If I'd gone to him and said I was ill back then... but I just didn't clock that as the start of it.

GREAT BRITAIN
Simplyhealth
KNOWLES-JONES
EDINBURGH
RODGERS

RIGHT: Harriet Knowles-Jones during her last international appearance in 2018

> "AT TIMES I FELT QUITE GUILTY ABOUT HOW DOWN I GOT ABOUT IT. I MEAN, IT'S RUNNING, THERE ARE FAR WORSE THINGS GOING ON, BUT WHEN YOU'RE RUNNING AND YOU'RE TRYING TO DO WELL, ALL YOUR MENTAL AND PHYSICAL ENERGY GOES INTO IT

ONE STEP FORWARD, TWO STEPS BACK

The symptoms of glandular fever would flare up every time I pushed it just a little too far. I'd be knocked out with tiredness and in bed for a week.

Every time I thought I was doing fine it was only because I didn't know any different. I kept pushing through when I probably shouldn't have done, so I lost a sense of what it should have been like. The worst point was when I couldn't manage a ten-minute run at almost nine-minute miling. I'd get to about six minutes then I'd have to walk home crying.

If I did what I was told – which I struggle to do sometimes – and I listened to my heart rate and ran to the limit I was given, then I'd get somewhere. I'd think my fitness was coming back, then I'd do a session and I'd push a bit too hard, then I'd get ill again. There was always that little glimmer of hope. I'd think: "But I did that good session." Even though I'd get ill, I'd always get somewhere, so I never fully let go of it.

LIFE OUTSIDE OF ATHLETICS

University helped a bit (Knowles-Jones studied medicine for a year in Liverpool before changing to mechanical engineering at the University of Manchester). I was so glad I had a course. When I was at Liverpool I stopped medicine for my running – and I did stop, I chose running over medicine and I don't regret that for a second – but I partly wanted to just run. My mum was like: "You can't just run, you've got to have something else because things can go wrong."

She had a bit of foresight there. I'm so glad I had the degree going in the background. I was so grateful to have something else to do.

I also started snowboarding. It was something I could do that wasn't very energy intensive. I really enjoyed it and I think it helped build up a good level of base fitness, but as soon as my running started to come together that got dropped. Running is always going to be my number one.

COMPARISON IS THE THIEF OF JOY

Glandular fever is such a weird one and I've struggled in the last five years to see how different people have handled it. I was like: "What am I doing wrong?"

I had to get rid of *Instagram* for a fair bit. I think that's why you cling to it so hard. You feel like everyone else is running away from you and that you're losing so much ground on them. That's probably why I never quite gave it as much time as I should have done to recover, just because I was so desperate to get back.

It was hard seeing people doing well, but it's such a tricky time between juniors and seniors anyway that I knew I wasn't alone in going through crap. I don't think anybody gets out unscathed.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SUPPORT AND UNDERSTANDING

At times I felt quite guilty about how down I got about it. I mean, it's running, there are far worse things going on, but when you're running and you're trying to do well, all your mental and physical energy goes into it. That's all you think about. It's very selfish, but I think you have to be.

It's amazing, though, so many people reached out to me. I found comfort in other runners coming to me to either to ask how I was handling it and how they could handle it, or how they'd handled it and how they could help me.

My mum [Jayne, who ran in the 1993 World Cross] is my biggest support. She's always said I can stop. Five years is a long time to keep trying, but every time I make the decision to keep going she supports that and she puts up with me.

My sister has also been an absolute rock through this because she knows exactly what it's like. She swam at the European juniors when she was younger, but she fractured her back. The fact that she couldn't swim at all, I think that's probably why I kept going. I was like: "You know what? You *can* run for five minutes today, so run for five minutes today." Having my sister go through that made my situation seem a lot less hopeless, because I knew there was a chance I'd get back to it.

RETURN TO RACING

We started with parkrun because there was no pressure. I think the whole point was that if I recovered from the parkrun then we'd take it from there. I was straight back into training on the Monday and I was fine, then I got round the Wednesday session. It was the first time I'd got out of a parkrun or a race and I'd been able to keep training. My mum kept asking: "Are you okay?"

I got away with it, so I thought: "Right, let's see what we can do now," and Cheshires [County Cross Country Championships] came around. I got so nervous. It was all the same feelings back again and it was as if nothing had changed. I'd run on that course when I was 12 or 13, I think, so it was like being that small again. It was just all faces from my childhood and I had the best day.

I didn't realise how much I was struggling until now that I'm not struggling. I don't know what the change has been this time. I can't pinpoint the time it clicked back, but I've had a good, solid nine months of uninterrupted running.

THE FUTURE

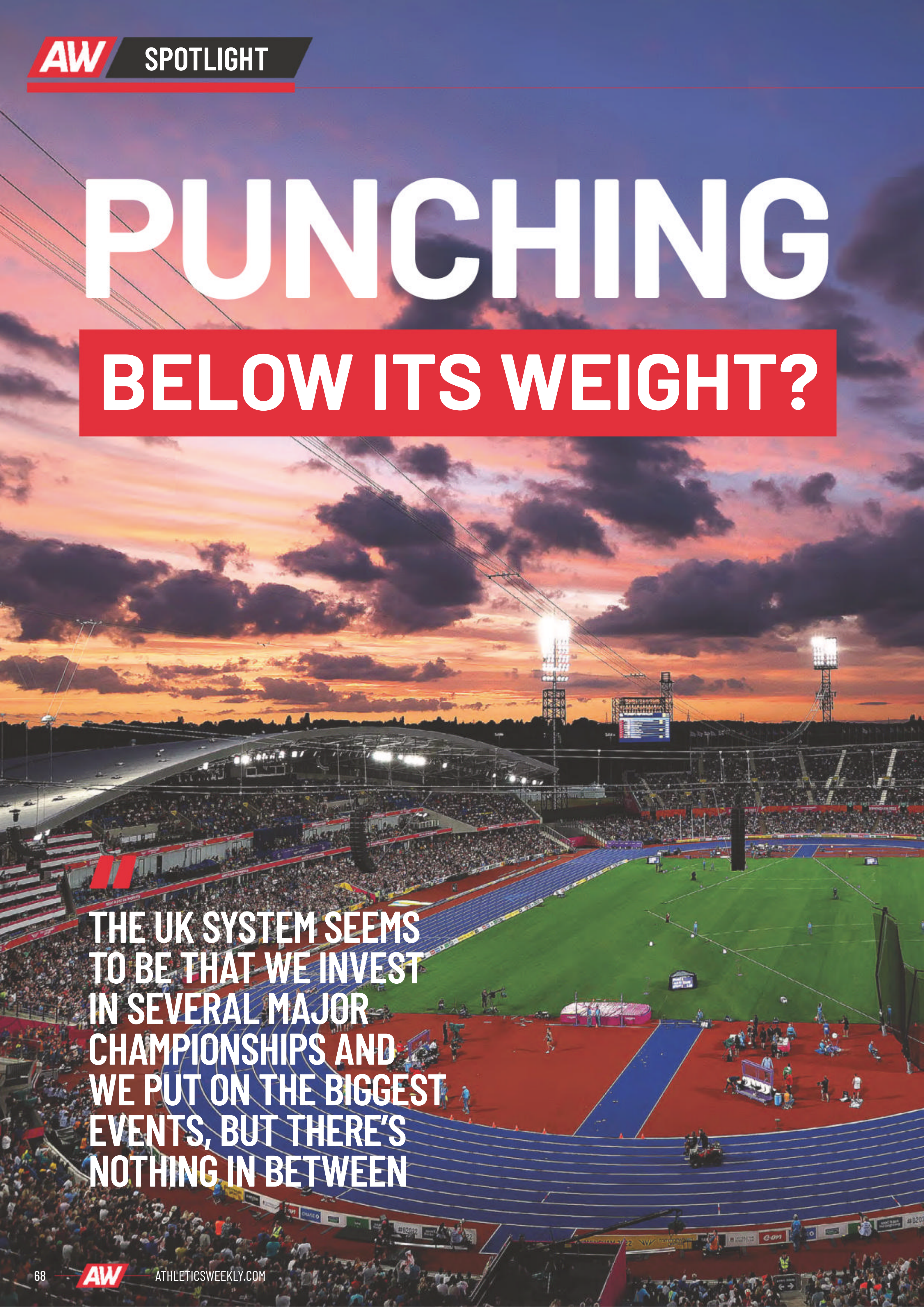
I think you forget very quickly how rubbish things have been and how low you got. You're very much like: "Right, okay, I'm doing this again". I'm right back into that mentality again now and I can feel the old tendencies coming back where I just want to push through. Things are going well, but I can't lose sight of listening to my body because I've worked for five years to be able to pick up on those signs.

I love racing and pushing myself. I don't think it matters who you're racing against or what it is, that's why you do it. I'd like to say I'd just be happy if I can keep racing, but I'm not going to be happy just to keep racing, I'm going to push it as far as I can take it, I know I am. AW

BELOW: Knowles-Jones was a European cross country champion in 2017

GREAT BRITAIN
SPAR
KNOWLES-JONES
I RUN CLEAN
ŠAMORÍN 2017

PUNCHING BELOW ITS WEIGHT?



> THE UK SYSTEM SEEMS TO BE THAT WE INVEST IN SEVERAL MAJOR CHAMPIONSHIPS AND WE PUT ON THE BIGGEST EVENTS, BUT THERE'S NOTHING IN BETWEEN

Great Britain is well-known for being excellent at staging major events, but what about the tiers of meetings which sit just below the top? **Paul Halford** finds there is plenty of work to be done on that front

Britain has become a world leader in hosting major championships. Indeed, by the time Birmingham stages the European Athletics Championships in 2026, it is scheduled to be the sixth global, continental or Commonwealth event staged in less than 10 years on these shores.

The nation has also hosted one or two Diamond League events per year since the world's top one-day series was established.

However, when it comes to the next level down, it's arguably a different story. The World Athletics Continental Tour (WACT) is a notch below the Diamond League and was established in 2020. Discounting the first year, which was heavily impacted by the pandemic, none of the 71 events in the series in 2021 were held in Britain.

As the series has grown, so has the number of UK meetings, but this year's calendar shows we perhaps still have some catching up to do. Taking into account the Diamond League, WACT and its indoor equivalent, the World Athletics Indoor Tour (WAIT), 52 countries will stage 269 meetings in 2023. Germany leads the way with 40 and Britain ranks sixth with 12.

However, given we are fortunate to be on the continent which dominates the calendar, the ranking of fifth in Europe is probably more notable. Many would point to the fact also that only five of those 12 cater for multiple discipline types, excluding events such as the British Milers' Club (BMC) meets. Having said that, it should be pointed out that at least 18 of Germany's events are similarly discipline-limited.

Great Britain & Northern Ireland regularly is among the top countries in the world on major championships medal tables, but is it punching below its weight when it comes to providing competition?

Anecdotally, we have long heard that British athletics does not cater adequately for the level beyond very top athletes – those that are not quite good enough to regularly get into Diamond ▷

BRITAIN'S DIAMOND LEAGUE, WORLD ATHLETICS CONTINENTAL TOUR AND WORLD INDOOR TOUR MEETINGS

- **28 Jan** Manchester World Indoor Tour *(WAIT Bronze)*
- **25 Feb** Birmingham World Indoor Tour Final *(WAIT Gold)*
- **13 May** Belfast Irish Milers' Meet *(WACT Challenger)*
- **20 May** Highgate Harriers Night of the 10,000m PB *(WACT Silver)**
- **27 May** British Milers' Club Grand Prix, Manchester *(WACT Challenger)*
- **10 Jun** British Milers' Club Grand Prix, Loughborough *(WACT Challenger)*
- **24 Jun** Manchester World Athletics Tour *(WACT Silver)*
- **1 Jul** British Milers' Club Grand Prix, Watford *(WACT Challenger)*
- **29 Jul** British Milers' Club Grand Prix, Birmingham University *(WACT Challenger)*
- **29 Jul** Loughborough EAP *(WACT Challenger)*
- **12 Aug** British Milers' Club Grand Prix, Trafford *(WACT Challenger)*
- **26 Aug** The Monument Mile Classic, Stirling *(WACT Challenger)*
- **23 July** London Diamond League *(DL)*

** Process pending.*

League meetings. This, in turn, leads to athletes instead having to find competition overseas.

It's an issue that may be becoming even more significant due to the heightened importance in recent years of the World Athletics Rankings (WAR). The WAR is a system that allocates points to each athlete, based on raw performance times or distances plus placings. It is now a major part of the process for qualification for major championships.

To illustrate this, only nine 100m runners qualified by entry standard for last year's World Championships whereas 39 did so via the WAR. Further, the qualifying standard for the Paris Olympics in 2024 in the men's 10,000m is 27:00.00 — a time achieved by only eight athletes in the world last year.

Each level of the WACT and WAIT has different requirements in terms of prize money and other criteria that need to be met. WAR points are not limited to Tour events but are stretched across all levels, from Olympic Games and World Championships (category OW) to open meetings (category F). The number of placings points allocated are graded so that more is at stake at the bigger meetings.

Miguel Perera, a GB sprint-hurdler who is also an accredited agent who seeks competition for 25 other athletes, believes Britain is woefully lacking in its provision of meetings for top athletes.

The Harrow AC athlete is a big supporter of domestic athletics. For example, last summer he competed for his club in the National Athletics League just three days after running for GB in the European Athletics Championships semi-final. However, *AW* spoke to him as he was travelling back from a meeting in France, his second overseas competition in as many weeks. He feels he needs to compete abroad as part of his development.

He said: "I think the UK is one of the worst at this by quite an extent. The UK system seems to be that we invest in several major championships and we put on the biggest events, but there's nothing in between and there's no support for the actual domestic athletes that need these comps."

Perera said he had spent thousands of pounds over the years competing abroad and, in 2022, in order to gain the European standard, needed to take out several loans to do so. He added: "The opportunities in the UK are so few and far between, it's hard. There are not actually that many good-quality competitions in the United Kingdom."

Vicente Modahl organises the summer Manchester World Athletics Continental Tour and the Manchester World Indoor Tour. Neither of these existed this time two years ago but both are now part of the main tours.

He agrees that the dearth of big events in this country is a "massive problem", adding: "A lot of agents and athletes have this notion that travelling abroad is what we like to do. It’s a problem that there is a huge void in Britain. If you look at Germany, it has 40 World Athletics tour and Diamond Leagues, indoors and outdoors.”

The UK’s best meetings have perhaps been slow off the mark when it comes to applying for the tour. Cherry Alexander, who looks after the top echelons of the calendar as major events lead for UK Athletics, is helping with the process of getting meetings on to the WACT and WAIT.

“It’s not that the UK doesn’t have the meetings,” she says. “It’s just, I guess, during 2020 into 2021 they should have said: ‘I want to put my meeting in, put an application in, get in the mix’. I think the UK needs to react quickly — we have got a lot of events, it’s about being wise to the programme, getting your application in.”

Alexander, who was instrumental in forming the idea for the WACT in her role as European Athletics vice president, encourages more competition providers to consider applying to be part of either series, noting that prize money is not necessary for Challenger status — the bottom tier below Gold, Silver and Bronze.

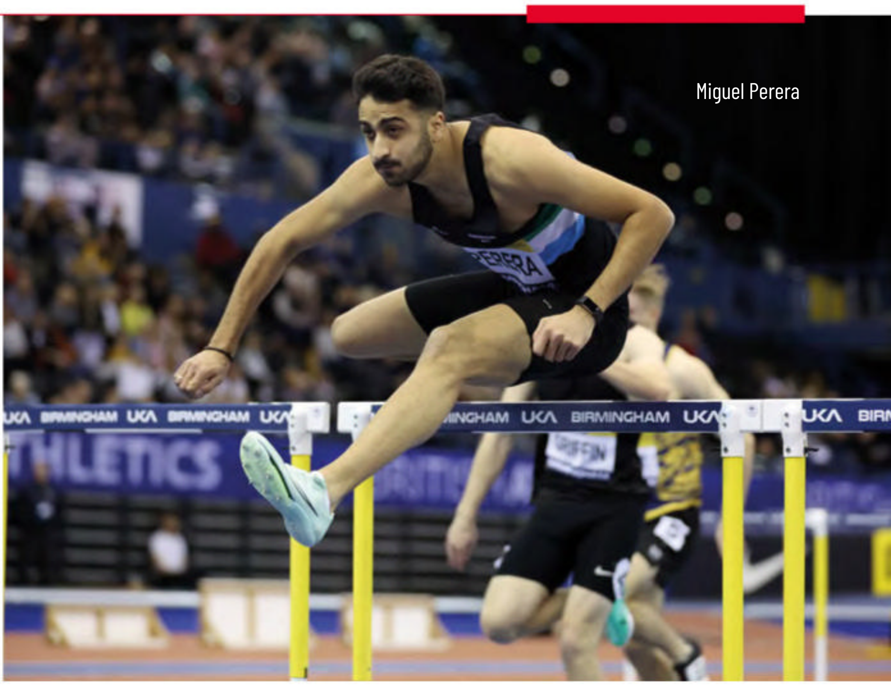
She says she has been flooded by applications to be added to the tour recently. It seems organisers of meetings in Britain are slowly realising the benefits of being on the WACT and WAIT. All five of the BMC Grand Prix events this year have been added to the WACT and will be Challenger level (category D on the WAR).

Tim Brennan, chairman of the BMC, explained the need to move forward and adapt in order to keep up.

“The aim of the club (BMC) has always been to make British endurance running a force in world athletics and that’s never going to change,” said Brennan, who admitted the move would lead to more organising cost and time but said it was a necessary switch, given the changes in the qualifying system for major championships.

“What we have to do is to adapt to what’s happening in the world of athletics and this is a new thing with the world series [qualifying].”

Modahl led the way in Britain with his Manchester meetings and feels that organisers need to be similarly innovative to plug the gap. “What Britain needs more than anything is new blood on the organising front,” he said. “Britain is a really big athletics nation. It should welcome and work with organisers like myself that actually have the courage to stand out from the norm and try to give opportunities to the athletes. The tradition in Britain is excellent on one hand and it’s probably holding back development on the other hand.”


Miguel Perera

> “A LOT OF AGENTS AND ATHLETES HAVE THIS NOTION THAT TRAVELLING ABROAD IS WHAT WE LIKE TO DO. IT’S A PROBLEM THAT THERE IS A HUGE VOID IN BRITAIN

He then referred to leagues being good for clubs but often, due to their nature, coming up with depleted fields.

Meetings like the *Night of the 10,000m PBs* in Highgate have shown the way forward as regards innovation. However, while the event has shown what can be done by volunteers, a more commercial outlook on the part of organisers may also be useful.

Alexander says: “It’s not just our country – everyone needs to be stimulated to get more commercial and business-minded, if I’m honest.”

Perera recognises the difficulty we have in relying so much on volunteers but highlights the need to try to be more businesslike.

“At what point do we start putting on competitions for the spectators, for making money, because that’s what other countries do?” he asks. “I think it’s going to have to come down to figuring out how to make money rather than just putting on competitions purely for athletes.” AW

GLOBAL COMPETITION LEADERBOARD

Britain is arguably slow off the blocks when it comes to the number of Wanda Diamond League, World Athletics Continental Tour, World Athletics Indoor Tour events in 2023. Of the 269 meetings in 52 countries, Britain will stage 12, of which seven are discipline-specific such as the BMC rather than full-programme.

GER	40
FRA	20
USA	17
SWE	13
CZE	13
GBR	12
POL	10
GRE	9
ITA	9
FIN	9

RANGE FINDER

In the second part of our marathon inspiration series, **Adrian Stott** speaks to international athlete Jo Zakrzewski, who has moved up in distance over the years and recently became the women's 48-hour world record-holder

臺北超級馬拉松
2023 Taipei U... arathon
248

ABOVE: Jo Zakrzewski breaking the 48-hour world record

Jo Zakrzewski is one of Britain's most decorated ultra marathon runners. The 47-year-old has won individual and team podium places at World and European championships, as well as being a GB International at 50km, 100km, 24 hours and Trail and Mountain Running.

She has twice placed fourth at the Comrades marathon in South Africa and ran for Scotland at the 2014 Commonwealth Games marathon in Glasgow. She recently set a women's world record for 48 hours, covering a distance of 255.6 miles.

You first moved up to the ultra distance in 2010, winning the 42-mile Devil of the Highlands Trail race in Scotland. How did that come about?

I got involved almost recreationally with my local Dumfries Running Club around 2008/09. I was involved with ultra races as an event medic and it inspired me to run more.

That led to me entering a stage race across the Atacama desert in 2010. My first non-stop ultra was the Devil of the Highlands. The club organised a weekend in the Highlands, where we ran short stretches of the route. Some members were training for that, so I decided to have a go, too.

I think I caused a little stir by turning up as an unknown runner and winning it!

You took the fast-track approach in transitioning to ultras but that doesn't work for everyone. What advice would you give to a marathon runner wanting to move up?

I would advise doing a regular marathon schedule but include some longer runs. Not too many of them and not too far. Too long a run wipes you out for a few days and takes time to recover. You want consistent, progressive training weeks. I never do a lot of over-distance runs or back-to-back weekend runs, as many ultra runners do. I always feel it's better to be undercooked rather than overcooked.

> FROM A PERFORMANCE POINT OF VIEW, IF YOU WANT TO BE FAST AT LONG DISTANCE, YOU HAVE TO BE FAST AT SHORT DISTANCE

There has often been a myth that moving up to ultras doesn't help your marathon times. Can 100km training help your marathon time, too?

From a performance point of view, if you want to be fast at long distance, you have to be fast at short distance. In trying to improve my marathon, I was doing several 10ks. You have to be fast at short to be fast at long. People say because you are good at 100km, the marathon will be easier. It is harder and faster, but you have to be able to adapt.

>> *(See Speed First: p78)*

You have made teams on roads and trails. What do you feel is your best surface?

I am not good on technical trails or mountains, especially downhill. Going uphill, I was always okay, and keeping a good rhythm and tempo on the roads suited me.

I would suggest not pigeonholing yourself but trying different surfaces and distances. Also, if you do something you like and not just something you are good at, you will get the best out of yourself, and I think it helps prolong your active career, too.

You went to Australia just before the pandemic in 2020 and ended up having what started as almost an enforced stay there. It gave you scope to experiment with longer distances.

Yes, I had the opportunity in lockdown to run an elite invitational 24-hour track race. I had no expectations going into it, but it all went well and I ended up setting Scottish records at 12 hours, 100 miles, 200km and the final 24-hour distance.

Your final distance of 236.562km qualified you for the European 24-hour championships in Verona last September

Yes, that enabled me to complete the full set of GB selection for 50km, 100km, ultra trail, mountain long course and 24 hours, which I didn't think anyone else had achieved. Apart from the 24 hour, I have individual or team medals at all the disciplines. I am still working on the 24 hour medal!

You broke Lizzy Hawker's long-standing GB 24hr record, running 247.984km in Verona. How did you find the transition from 100km to 24 hours?

I had no idea what Lizzy's record was going into the race. I knew what the Scottish road records were and also the GB masters records, so they were in the back of my mind. I had had a minor injury in the build-up, and although I was fit to run, I wasn't sure how the race would evolve.

As it happened, I was going well and I made the record with a few minutes to spare. Compared to 100km, you are running a little slower, needing to concentrate on the next little intermediate goal rather than thinking of keeping moving for 24 hours or 48 hours.

I had a similar interrupted build-up to my recent 48hr race in Taipei [where Zakrzewski broke the women's world record]. The world championships are being held there this December. I thought it would be a good idea to go and run for 24 hours to check out the course and the conditions.

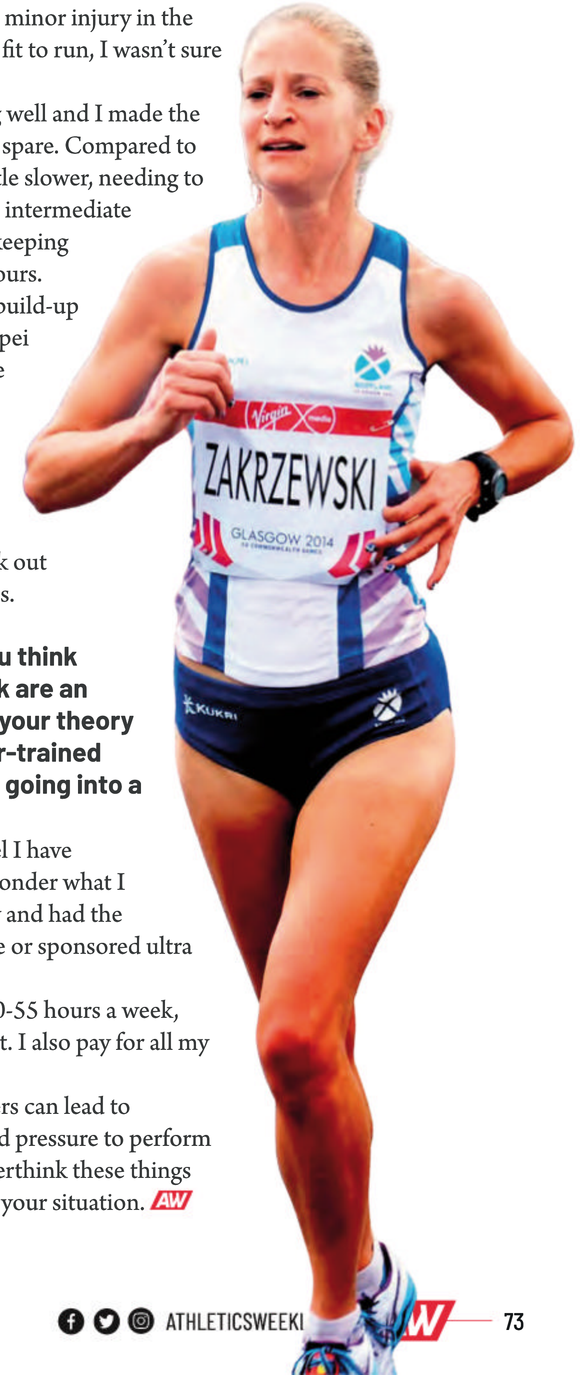
In the long events, do you think lifetime miles in the bank are an asset? Does it illustrate your theory that one should be under-trained rather than over-trained going into a big race?

I have had phases where I feel I have overtrained and suffered. I wonder what I could do if I trained properly and had the support some of the full-time or sponsored ultra runners have.

As a GP, I regularly work 50-55 hours a week, fitting everything around that. I also pay for all my kit and travel to most events.

Having sponsors and backers can lead to unnecessary expectations and pressure to perform well in each race. You can overthink these things and have to make the best of your situation. AW

BELOW: Zakrzewski competing in the 2014 Commonwealth Games marathon



NEWS

Paul Halford looks at the latest developments in the pursuit of improvement

TACKLING SYMPTOMS OF POOR MENTAL HEALTH

Previous studies have indicated that athletes are particularly susceptible to mental health problems. A recent paper published in *Psychology of Sport and Exercise* has helped shine a light on some of the symptoms of poor mental health in athletes and how it can be alleviated.

Experts at Staffordshire University and Manchester Metropolitan University surveyed 410 competitors, 84 of whom were runners. Forty-one per cent were described as "recreational" but they included all levels up to international.

They found that greater irrational beliefs were directly correlated to lower self-confidence, which in turn led to anxiety in competition and depression. It is claimed to be the first study to examine such beliefs alongside self-confidence and mental health.

Phrases such as "if I lose, I'm a failure" or "if I face setbacks, it shows how stupid I am" are warning signs, authors of the study said.

One of the co-authors, Dr Martin Turner, from Manchester Metropolitan University, said: "In our recent study, self-depreciation beliefs were found to be the main predictor of low self-confidence. In simple terms, when an athlete puts themselves down and uses language like 'If I lose, it means I am a failure' it is most damaging and most likely to lead to losses of confidence. This is then likely to have a knock-on effect on performance and wellbeing.

"We can all work to help athletes develop mindsets that help them deal with the challenges of sport and life. By encouraging rational and logical beliefs about performance, we can help athletes to stay healthy amidst the high demands of competitive sport."

The authors recommended Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy to boost self-confidence. This method might, for example, involve replacing the belief "I am a failure if I fail" with "failing is not ideal, but it does not mean that I am a failure".

Fellow author Paul Mansell from Staffordshire University added: "The good news is that irrational beliefs can be challenged and weakened. A coach, team-mate or a sports psychologist can listen out for irrational phrases and help athletes to counter them.

"Promoting helpful self-talk or imagery can really help to shift somebody's mindset from being rigid and illogical to being more rational, flexible and healthy."

GET MORE ACTIVE TO GET BETTER SLEEP

Exercise has long been known to improve sleep quality. Further research from the Japan Advanced Institute of Science and Technology showed even vigorous activity seems to have this positive effect.

In a pool of people aged 40-64, the scientists replaced 60 minutes of daily sedentary or light exercise with moderate-to-vigorous physical activity, representing the first study to use such a substitution. A questionnaire was used to assess their sleep quality.

The intervention was found to improve sleep health, although interestingly no significant differences were found for women. Publishing their findings in *Scientific Reports*, the scientists said more research was needed to ascertain the reason for the different results between the sexes.

OMEGA-3 CAN BOOST YOUR RUNNING

Omega-3, a fat found naturally in the diet, could boost running economy and increase VO2 max, according to a recent study.

Scientists in Gdansk and Southampton put 26 amateur runners on either a supplement of omega-3 fatty acid capsules (2234mg) or a placebo for 12 weeks. The runners had to perform an incremental test to exhaustion and a 1500m time trial before and afterwards.

Reporting in *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise*, they found the Omega-3 index almost doubled in those taking the Omega-3 supplement.

VO2 peak increased by an average of 53.6ml/kg/min to an average of 56ml/kg/min in the Omega-3 group whereas there was no significant increase in the control group. Running economy was also improved in the Omega-3 runners. However, the supplement appeared to have no effect on 1500m time trial performance.

Kaitlin Roke, PhD, Director of Scientific Communication and Outreach, Global Organization for EPA and DHA Omega-3 (GOED), told *Nutra Ingredients Europe*: “After reading this article, I am curious to see if there would be an impact over other running distances [than 1500m].”

However, Dr Roke cautioned: “The authors measured VO2 max, which is a common and regular measurement in exercise physiology studies. However, this measurement is subject to a lot of variability — including temperature and humidity of the room [which was controlled for by Tomczyk et al].

“This exemplifies one of the challenges in measuring changes and outcomes related to supplementation and exercise studies — some of these ‘objective’ markers have a lot of variability, making it hard to detect meaningful changes. And a lot of the important cellular changes can't be seen or felt!”

PRODUCT FOCUS

GYMPROLUXE – ALL IN ONE PORTABLE GYM

Gymproluxestore.com

£195.95

Train from home without the need for full-scale body workout machines with this kit that takes up the minimum amount of space. Lightweight and portable, it’s also great for use when travelling and is the lightest of its type on the market.

Able to recreate over 100 exercises, from deadlifts to bench press, the kit can provide up to 90kg of resistance.

It’s easy to use and to tailor the resistance. There are also a wide range of videos available to follow to give you the complete body workout.

A year on from joining Team New Balance Manchester, the British indoor 3000m silver medallist talks to **Katy Barden** about how slowing things down has helped her speed up

HOW THEY TRAIN

HANNAH NUTTALL

AGE: 25 **COACH:** HELEN CLITHEROE

The composition of Hannah Nuttall's training may not have altered significantly since she joined Team New Balance Manchester, but the execution of her sessions has had a dramatic impact on her performances.

She opened her 2023 indoor season with an outright 3000m best of 8:52.63 at the BMC Sheffield Grand Prix before shattering that mark with 8:47.72 at the New Balance Indoor Grand Prix in Boston in February.

At the European Athletics Indoor Championships in Istanbul – representing Great Britain and Northern Ireland on the track for the first time – she improved her personal best to 8:46.30, finishing an impressive fifth in the 3000m final.

"This indoor season has exceeded all expectations..." she wrote on *Instagram* post-race. "I've learnt so much and gained a lot of confidence."

Prior to relocating to the north-west of England, Nuttall – a qualified nutritionist – was based in London where she worked full-time and was coached remotely by her dad, John Nuttall, an Olympian and 1994 Commonwealth Games 5000m bronze medallist.

The Charnwood athlete comes from good stock, and throughout her career she has also benefited from the input and experience of her mum, Alison Wyeth, a two-time Olympian and 1994 Commonwealth bronze medallist over 3000m.

"Work was intense and I was having to fit training around that," says the 25-year-old of her time in the capital. "It wasn't really optimal... I'd just drag myself round and get it done, but I wasn't ever smashing training or doing very good sessions. It was more just getting through it."

Since moving to Manchester, her fast-paced lifestyle – as well as her training pace – has slowed substantially. That's in part due to a refreshing focus on running and recovery without the distraction of a traditional day-job, but also due to the additional influence of coach Helen Clitheroe, the 2011 European indoor 3000m champion who represented Britain over 1500m and in the 3000m steeplechase.

"Helen has had to reel me in a bit," admits Nuttall, who believes she has the potential to step up in distance and impress over 5000m this year. "That's been a really big thing, because I used to do my runs pretty quick. Just having her there to tell me what to do whilst we're training makes a really big difference.

"In the past, if my dad had set me a session and I was feeling awful, I would drag myself through that session and do everything to try and hit those splits even if I wasn't feeling good, whereas if Helen is watching me, she might say, 'Don't do this', or 'Keep it controlled today'.

"It's been quite surprising, because I always used to think that if you train harder then you'll be better, but it's training smarter rather than hard all the time." AW

saucony
530
BMC
522

A TYPICAL TRAINING WEEK

Nuttall has been susceptible to injuries in the past and commits to at least one non-running day per week, in addition to slowing down her runs more generally. Since joining Team New Balance Manchester, she has also introduced a gym programme which she believes is reaping rewards.

"I find that if I'm able to sleep well, eat well and do all the small stuff that really helps me," she says. "I think just being able to do all of those things has made a really big difference [to my performances]."

- ♦ **Monday:** easy day/pre-session day – 6 miles and drills, then strides (6 x 100m strides).
- ♦ **Tuesday:** (am) 1500m or 5km track session such as 4 x 1000m followed by 4 x 200m or 12-18 x 400m; (pm) 30min on a static bike.
- ♦ **Wednesday:** cross-train (elliptical) and gym session. "The gym work has made a really big difference," says Nuttall. "I didn't do gym much before I joined the team because I wasn't that confident – but now I've got Helen and the team to help guide me. This has made me more confident and my technique has improved a lot. Before, I'd just focus on the running. I thought the gym was a bit gimmicky and I didn't think I needed to do it. I don't agree with that now as I've invested time in it and I can really see the benefits in my strength and performances."
- ♦ **Thursday:** easy run, 8 miles approx., followed by drills and strides.
- ♦ **Friday:** (am) tempo session. "This is normally the longest volume session in the week and it's quite controlled, which is something that I'm quite new to," she says. "Before I joined the team my tempos were a lot faster but I've slowly realised that faster isn't always better, especially when it comes to tempo work. An example of a tempo session would be a 6-7-mile tempo or 3 x 2-mile efforts, and we often have Helen on the bike to make sure we are running controlled and in the right training zone." (pm) bike.
- ♦ **Saturday:** easy 5-7-mile run then gym.
- ♦ **Sunday:** 10-12 miles long run. "This is the one run that I'm allowed to push if I feel good, so the pace can range from 7:20 to 6:20 pace, but I'll usually just go off feel. I'll also try to make this run hilly to help with my strength."

Favourite session

"4 x (1km-400m) – 90sec between 1km and 400m, 3min between sets. The 1km will be around 3km pace and the 400m will be around 1500m pace. I really like that session. Those are the sessions that give you confidence if you hit the splits."

Least favourite session

"I've not done this one with Helen, but I've done it in the past – 4 x 400m with 4min recovery. Those sessions are just painful, you just know it's going to really hurt."

SPEED FIRST

When it comes to training for long distance events, conventional wisdom puts the priority on mileage. However, coach **Jason Karp** argues that flipping the template on its head, and introducing faster work at the start of a programme, could pay dividends

I once coached a 33-year-old runner who ran a 2:48:39 marathon off the back of 130km/80 miles per week. Soon after she ran that time, which missed the then qualifying time for the US Olympic Marathon Trials by 39 seconds, she joined a sponsored group with a coach, who said she could run mid-2:30s.

Having coached her in person for two years, I was sceptical she could do that. To run a marathon that fast, she would have needed to be able to run 5km in 16:00-16:15 and, at that time, her PB was 18:08.

Often, runners' performances plateau not because of what they do, but because of what they don't do. And one of the things that many runners don't do is to work on their basic speed. They never become fast runners.

So what might happen if you turn the traditional model of distance running training on its head and train speed first before training endurance? What happens when runners train at the right speed rather than at the right distance?

At first glance, the notion of speed training for a marathon is ridiculous. Who has not experienced that more mileage, even when those miles are run slowly, leads to a faster marathon?

But there are several reasons for training speed first for long-distance races.

Firstly, it ensures the training becomes more specific as the race approaches. Long runs, acidosis (lactate) threshold runs, marathon-pace runs and higher overall mileage is more marathon and half-marathon-specific than, say, VO2 max interval workouts and speedwork.

A more traditional approach to training means the volume is reduced while intensity is increased as athletes get closer to the race. In contrast, with a speed-first approach, the athlete starts with higher intensity and decreases the intensity over time as he or she increases the volume, thereby doing more race-specific work as the race approaches.

Secondly, it gives athletes an increased speed reserve, which makes marathon goal pace easier and enables faster times.

Thirdly, the speed-first approach recognises that VO2 max increases with anaerobic training and that VO2 max should be maximised before training the fraction of it that can be sustained.

Even though VO2 max is considered an aerobic factor that represents the maximum volume of oxygen the muscles can consume per minute, it is often not recognised that the running speed at which VO2 max occurs includes a large dependence on anaerobic metabolism.

In other words, when an athlete revs their aerobic engine as fast as it can go, their muscles also rely on anaerobic metabolism to run at that speed.

Research has shown that the amount of time athletes can sustain exercise at VO2 max is ▷

positively correlated with their anaerobic capacity (that is, athletes with a larger anaerobic capacity are able to sustain exercise at VO2 max for longer than athletes with a poorer anaerobic capacity).

It has also been shown that sprint interval training itself improves VO2 max, supporting the significant role that anaerobic fitness (speed) plays in VO2 max and distance running performance. The improved anaerobic fitness gained from speed training also makes the more metabolically demanding VO2 max workouts seem easier.

Fourthly, focusing on speed first improves running skill and running economy, both of which enable athletes to handle, and even thrive off, their training. Workouts in subsequent phases of the training will also feel easier and more fluid, as the skill of running is mastered.

To train the endurance of speed, focus on these five themes:

Initial development of basic speed to become a faster runner

Most marathon training programmes neglect the development of speed, instead focusing on the weekly mileage and duration of the long run. Many runners and coaches think that sprinting is a waste of time while training for a marathon. They think, because the marathon is 100 per cent aerobic, the training should reflect that and also be 100 per cent aerobic.

Logically, that makes sense. However, if athletes never devote any training time to sprinting to develop their basic speed, they will limit how fast their marathon can get.

In addition, if they never train their fast-twitch muscle fibres, they can never rely on them for the power they produce or the fuel they store. When athletes become faster runners, their marathon pace will feel easier and they'll be able to run a faster marathon.

More marathon-specific work as the race approaches

By starting with higher intensity and then progressing to higher volume, instead of the other way around as is typical of most marathon training programmes, athletes do the most marathon-specific work at the time they need it. The decrease in intensity combined with an increase in volume doesn't mean the training gets easier, only that the later emphasis is on marathon-specific endurance.

Training at the right speed rather than at the right distance

One of the biggest mistakes runners and coaches make when training for a marathon is not considering the demands of the race and not being specific enough in their training to meet those demands.

There's not much value in running long and easy all the time, since that is not specific training to running a fast marathon.

It's much easier for an athlete to run at 90 per cent of their speed if their baseline running is at 80 per cent than it is if his baseline running is at 60 per cent. It is also much easier to extend the familiar intensity than it is to introduce an unfamiliar intensity.

How athletes accomplish this is by increasing the volume of intensity – the volume of specific workouts and the volume of running at marathon pace, with the end goal of sustaining their realistic goal marathon pace for longer and longer periods of time – ideally, for the entire 26.2 miles. This process takes months to years, not weeks.

Interval training with unlimited repetitions

Nearly all coaches prescribe and nearly all runners perform a specific number of reps for interval workouts, with that number decided before the workout begins. However, the number of reps is not all that important and is usually an arbitrary decision.

There's no magic in doing five or six or 10 reps. What is important is causing fatigue during the workout, because fatigue is what the body responds and adapts to. Do as many reps as it takes to cause a sufficient amount of fatigue on that day.

In addition to the physiological reasons for training with unlimited reps is the psychological reason: for athletes to avoid limiting themselves. If they focus on one rep at a time without any preconceived idea as to how many reps they'll do, they're forced to stay in the moment and focus only on the rep they're running. When they do that, they may end up completing the workout running more reps than they thought they could.

Interval training with a high volume of repetitions

Running many miles per week is a great (and necessary) way to build general endurance, but not specific endurance. To build specific endurance – the endurance of speed – athletes need to run faster paces for longer. And one clever way to do that is to break up their interval workouts into shorter reps so they can do more of them and spend more time per workout at a given intensity. The shorter the distance run, the more total distance (and time) they can complete in the workout at the same pace.

To become a faster runner, start by running faster. And then train the endurance of speed.

Dr Jason Karp is a coach, exercise physiologist and author.

HOW TO TRAIN THE ENDURANCE OF SPEED

Training is divided into three phases: general preparation, specific preparation and taper. The general preparation phase is made up of four training cycles and emphasises anaerobic power, anaerobic capacity, anaerobic capacity/aerobic power, and aerobic power, respectively. The specific preparation phase is made up of five training cycles, emphasising aerobic capacity, acidosis threshold, and marathon (or half-marathon) pace.

The latter part of the programme includes more race-specific endurance training as athletes approach their marathon or half-marathon race, to improve their ability to maintain a high fraction of the speed they trained in the general preparation phase.

PHASE 1: **GENERAL PREPARATION**

- Speed (Anaerobic Power)
- Speed Endurance (Anaerobic Capacity)
- Weekly Mileage: 55-70% peak

Training Cycle 1

- Emphasis: Speed (Anaerobic Power)
- Very fast sprints for 5-20 seconds, with standing/walking recovery intervals of 3-5 minutes
- Weekly Mileage: 55% peak

Training Cycle 2

- Emphasis: Speed Endurance (Anaerobic Capacity)
- Long sprints of 30-90 seconds, with jogging recovery intervals at least double the length of time as the reps
- Weekly Mileage: 60% peak

Training Cycle 3

- Emphasis 1: Speed Endurance (Anaerobic Capacity)
- Emphasis 2: VO2max (Aerobic Power)
- Hard runs of 3-5 minutes at or very near 100% max heart rate (about roughly six to nine seconds per kilometre faster than 5km race pace, or about 15-18 seconds per kilometre faster than 10km race pace), with jogging recovery intervals slightly less than or equal to the time of the reps
- Weekly Mileage: 65% peak

Training Cycle 4

- Emphasis: VO2 max (Aerobic Power)
- Weekly Mileage: 70% peak

PHASE 2: **SPECIFIC PREPARATION**

- Acidosis Threshold
- Marathon-Specific Endurance
- Weekly Mileage: 75-100% peak

Training Cycle 5

- Emphasis 1: VO2max (Aerobic Power)
- Emphasis 2: Acidosis Threshold
- Comfortably hard runs at 85-90% max heart rate (roughly 15-18 seconds per kilometre slower than 5km race pace or about nine to 12 seconds per kilometre slower than 10Km race pace)
- Weekly Mileage: 75% peak

Training Cycle 6

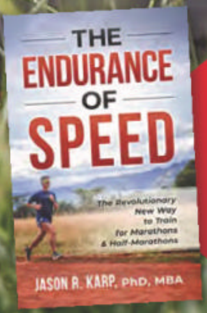
- Emphasis 1: Acidosis Threshold
- Emphasis 2: Marathon Pace
- Runs at realistic goal marathon pace, extending the amount of time to sustain the pace
- Weekly Mileage: 85-90% peak

Training Cycles 7, 8, & 9

- Emphasis: Acidosis Threshold
- Emphasis 2: Marathon Pace
- Weekly Mileage: 90-100% peak

PHASE 3: **TAPER**

- Workouts are of same intensity but of a lesser volume than what was done during the specific preparation phase.
- Weekly Mileage: 30-50% peak


THE ENDURANCE OF SPEED

The Revolutionary New Way to Train for Marathons & Half-Marathons

JASON R. KARP, PhD, MBA

Adapted from *The Endurance of Speed* by Jason Karp

PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES

SO YOU WANT TO BE A COACH?

Are you a newly qualified coach or thinking of becoming one? Former international athlete **John Shepherd** has been guiding athletes for all of his adult life and shares some of the key lessons he has learned which could help fast forward your own journey

Developing knowledge never stops

You're freshly qualified and your official coaching journey has begun. The reality is that unless you have studied the events you intend to coach analytically and with clarity for many years and/or have a sports science degree, you will be starting with limited knowledge.

I have come to realise that, no matter your starting point, you either won't know as much as you thought you did, or you will be startled by the complexity that soon becomes apparent.

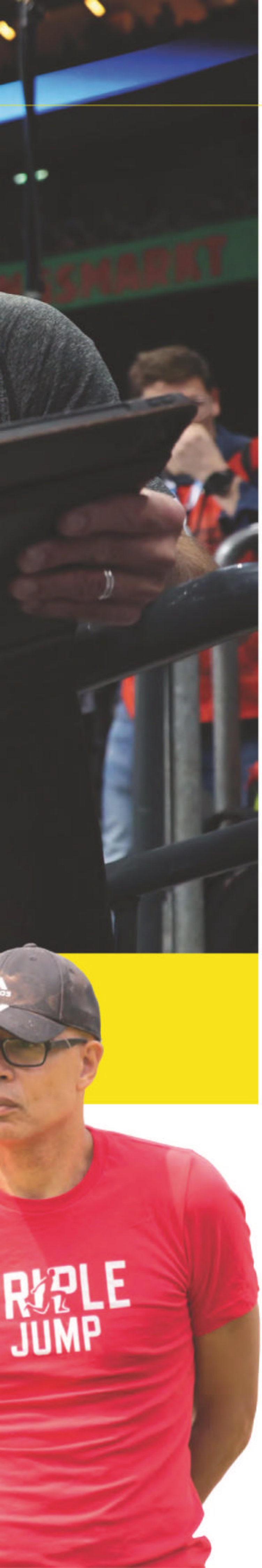
So, put your ego aside. You may have been an athlete, for example, but does that qualify you to coach? Just because you had success following a way of training does not mean that it will work for the athletes you will be leading.

Also, in my experience the more you think you know the more you'll discover that you don't actually know so be prepared to put in the hard yards and start to really learn how to coach, what to coach and when to coach it.

Coaching is a people business

No matter the knowledge you have, you will have to be a people person, a teacher and an educator. You should enjoy imparting knowledge and you must be capable of getting that over to your athletes.

Having confidence and maintaining a positive and motivated outlook can be a challenge, however. You have to strive towards that consistency.



"

BE PREPARED TO PUT IN THE HARD YARDS AND START TO REALLY LEARN HOW TO COACH, WHAT TO COACH AND WHEN TO COACH IT

Always explain to your athletes why they are doing a drill, a training session and what the benefits will be. Make it relatable to the athletes and their level.

If they understand the logic behind what you are doing, the likelihood is that the training adaptation will be enhanced.

It will also lead them on to being able to develop their own understanding (useful if they intend to coach later in life) or start questioning and working out for themselves what training works for them. Ultimately, as a coach with senior athletes you will become more of an advisor.

Develop a coaching philosophy

You must have a vision as to how you will coach. This will be based on training programme design and the fundamentals of the event you decide to coach. There are different ways to coach the various disciplines and this will reflect your philosophy.

I will say, however, that there are "better" philosophies than others if you can understand the training science and have first-hand, long-term experience of what works.

I was able to distil the knowledge I gained as an international athlete, working with various coaches and my own desire to learn, together with two decades of health, sports and fitness writing. Yes, this is very unique, however you should try to do similar with your knowledge base.

I advise you to strip back the events you coach to see what will really improve the athlete and discard what you think is less likely to.

Sweat the technique

Place technique centre stage and you won't go far wrong as a starting point. Look at the movements and how the power is created; work out the muscular actions and how the order of movements happen and coach those as jigsaw pieces. If you do that then the "event puzzle" will fall together that more easily.

Read the sports science – but don't believe all of it!

Sports science has a limited applicability to real-world coaching. The rigour of an experiment, often with not entirely relevant cohorts, will likely create findings which may not fully translate into the reality of what you're doing. Use the science as a guide but put your own stamp on it and implement it when you have the knowledge and understanding of its applicability.

Be prepared to fail – and to ask for help

As I've mentioned, park your ego at the door and accept that becoming a good coach takes time. Mistakes will happen but also be wary of failing athletes because you don't know what you are doing!

If you don't understand what you're doing then don't do it. Better to stick to the basics and then develop that understanding over time of when to introduce something new or different.

I find many coaches won't ask other coaches for advice. It's perhaps seen as a weakness or as a covering up of the reality that they don't actually know themselves.

I'll be honest, I know less about the triple jump than I do the long jump and much less still about the high jump so I ask questions and hope that I'll get some answers that will help. Now, I will say that you need to question the answers otherwise you might go down a blind alley. And whilst you are learning from others you still need to be learning yourself.

Follow coaches and athletes on social media you believe you can learn from. Focus on those that add explanations as to why they do certain things.

Respect other coaches but don't do what they do until you think it through and apply it to your situation. Keep an enquiring mind.

Shadow another coach

You will hugely accelerate your learning if you see how a good coach operates in the real world. So many months of figuring it out for yourself will be saved as you see how a good coach plans, implements and interacts. Buy them a coffee or, better still, pay them for their time!

Enjoy your coaching and make time for you

Have fun coaching. Not every session needs to be by the textbook. Adapt and throw in some fun exercises and drills from time to time.

Take it from me, coaching can be draining. You absorb so much from the athletes and others, so you need to take time out for yourself.

If you want to take a day off, then don't be afraid to do just that. I bet your athletes don't turn up to every session.

If you do a good job, explain your actions and get results then your athletes should respect your decisions and be by your side. AW

ASK THE PHYSIO

PAUL HOBROUGH

Paul Hobrough is a running specialist physiotherapist.

You can contact him via:
physio@hobrough-healthcare.com
or visit
hobrough-healthcare.com

Paul conducts Q&A sessions every month and you can submit questions to him via our social media channels (use the tag #askthephysio) or via email at:
haveyoursay@athleticsweekly.com

Paul Hobrough answers your questions and helps to solve your injury problems

With the big spring marathons approaching, what extra things outside of running can I be doing in the final few weeks of training to prepare?

The key factor here is about your taper to recover from the training and allow all of your body's stores, like glycogen, to come back up again.

It's also crucial to keep your mobility and stretching going all the way up to the marathon. I think swimming is brilliant for an active recovery. Just being in the pool and doing strokes helps to develop flexibility around the knees, lower back and shoulders. Stretching is great to do and just going for walks also helps.

The body doesn't tend to like that fairly sharp reduction in training so just keep yourself mobile.

Also get lots of hydration. Too many people make the mistake of drinking loads in the days before the marathon itself but because they haven't done that before, it's like putting a hosepipe on a dry sponge and it just bounces off. So make sure you stay more hydrated earlier on in your training programme so your cells can adapt more easily.

You don't need to consume pints and pints of fluids the day before. All you'll do is wee that out with all the electrolytes as well.

The final thing is get some sleep. The night before the marathon you probably won't sleep well as you're nervous and there's great science to say that has no impact on your performance. But make sure you get some quality sleep nearer that time.

What are the best stretches for tightness behind the back of the knee?

Predominantly, tightness there can be due to three key structures. Firstly, the hamstrings originate from your pelvis, come down the back of your leg and insert into the top of the tibia around the lower leg. When they contract it bends the knee. That is the most likely culprit if people are feeling they have tightness around the back of the knee.

Secondly, we have the calf muscles. They come from the achilles tendon at the heel up to the bottom of the thigh bone. They can be a weak part of the knee flexion process but they essentially flex the foot and are a key mover when you're running.

There's also a small muscle called popliteus. When the knee fully locks out it twists ever so slightly, so to untwist it that muscle contracts to allow movement in the knee.

So look at hamstring and calf stretching. There's also something called nerve flossing for the sciatic nerve that you can do. Start off in a slumped position and cast your hands behind your back and slump down that much you can try and get your chin into your belly button.

Then, on the side which is tight, slowly start to straighten that leg and you'll feel tension in the back of the knee. However, by keeping your head nodded down and keeping straight, you'll start to floss your nerve as you slowly bring your leg back in. Hamstring stretches would be my first port of call before you do that, though. AW

2023 EY GUERNSEY EASTER RUNNING FESTIVAL

April 7-10

Cash prizes boosted for this year's four-day celebration

Guernsey Athletics Club has boosted the value of cash prizes for competitors in this year's EY Guernsey Easter Running Festival.

The four-day event features road 5km, cross country, 4x1 mile cross country relay and road 10km races across the holiday weekend.

There are individual cash prizes for the three main events, but many participants will enter all of them to be in with a chance of the overall prize, too. £250 will go to the winner of each of the 5km and 10km races, plus another £100 for the cross country and the overall prize of another £250.

The total prize pot of £4000 features separate prizes for male and female competitors, plus veterans' prizes for each.

Organisers are also offering a full refund of entry fees to any visiting athlete who beats the Island Games A standard – 15:40 for 5km and 33:00 minutes for 10k for men and 18:10/38:15 for women. There are a limited number of packages available for elite athletes. Please contact **tom.druce@guernseyathletics.org.gg** for information.

For more information and to book your entry, visit: guernseyeasterrunning.com

---

THE HAMPSHIRE HOPPIT TRAIL MARATHON AND HALF MARATHON

8th Year

Sunday 18 June 2023

Marathon (9am start)
Half marathon (10.30am start)
Kingsclere, Hampshire.

Marathon competitors must be 18 years or over on race day or Half Marathon 17 years or older.

Trail Running Association Permit TRA5134 (Marathon) and TRA5135 (Half Marathon). The event will be held under UK Athletics Rules.

> *"Everything was amazing from the course, the views, the people, the marshals, the finish."*

> *"Love the Hampshire Hoppit, always challenging, but with the gift of the most wonderful views. Wonderfully supported all the way round you can't fail to love this race."*

Rated Top UK Race Event again

2018, 2019, 2021 & 2022

Included in your entry fee...
Finisher medals, engraved beer glasses, Hoppit ale, and free photos

New for 2023: Bridgedale Trail Socks giveaway

Bridgedale

The HAMPSHIRE hoppit

In conjunction with:

Search Hampshire Hoppit on:
or go to: **www.hampshiretrailmarathon.co.uk**

RUN IN COMFORT

With spring marathon season approaching it's a time for higher mileage. **Paul Freary** tests some of the most comfortable footwear – and running kit – which will help keep you on track

PUMA FOREVERRUN NITRO

Puma.com **£140.00**

This new model really could be a game changer. Incorporating several new design features to help stability and control pronation, it also provides excellent cushioning thanks to a dual density Nitro foam midsole.

That midsole is made up of two densities of Puma's nitrogen-injected foam. A softer core sits with a slightly firmer and more supportive outer rim, which allows the foot to sink into the core and help keep it stable.

A combination of features then make up the new *runguide* system. A bevelled heel, segmented crash pad and external heel clip all combine to add stability, but it doesn't stop there. A broader footprint in the heel and forefoot, along with an outsole that wraps around the lateral side of the shoe, add an extra sprinkle of control.

The beauty of all of these features is that they combine to create a shoe which feels very natural to run in – soft and welcoming with a really smooth ride. You really wouldn't suspect it to be a control shoe at all.

Another detail is a gentle forefoot metatarsal dome in the insole. This helps spread the forefoot a little and create natural stability – another selling point from this great shoe.

HOKA CLIFTON 9

Hoka.com **£130.00**

The Clifton was the shoe that brought the HOKA brand into the mainstream running community, helping to coin the term 'maximal-cushioning'.

The ninth version mixes familiarity with a few changes to help it keep pace with the pack. Cushioning is increased, with a 3mm higher stack in the midsole, although disappointingly it's still a compression-moulded EVA material.

Interestingly, the overall weight of the shoe is down a few grams and it does feel a little softer in that familiar, plush manner, but by comparison to other cushioning foams now available it does lack a little bounce.

The heel drop remains at 5mm (32/27mm in men's, 29/24mm women's) and the overall shape and ride is unchanged.

The upper has a new engineered mesh design and feels the best yet, with a nice fit around the heel and Achilles. Previous Clifton wearers will enjoy this update but will be hoping that a new, more modern and responsive foam will be added to this fan favourite in future.

NIKE INVINCIBLE 3

Nike.com **£169.95**

This return of this super soft daily training model represents Nike's most cushioned shoe to date.

There is no carbon plate here but, as with the company's racing shoes – the Alphafly and Vaporfly – the Invincible uses the highly responsive ZoomX foam.

In this updated version we see even more of the super-foam (now a 40mm stack) for an ultra-cushioned ride. The midsole has also changed shape a little to give that large volume of cushioning a little more stability. It's wider in the heel, midfoot and under the metatarsal heads (just behind the toes) to create a stable platform to push off from. An external heel clip also provides control but, strictly speaking, we'd still consider this a neutral cushioned model.

It's a lovely ride, soaking up the miles with a little added bounce on push-off. That said, this overall softer ride means that when you really want to pick up the pace you feel a little bit of that power is lost as it sinks into the shoe. Everyday easier running is therefore where the shoe excels.

The Flyknit upper proves great support and has a textured feel to it that seems make it a little splash-proof, although there's no specific word from Nike on this finish.

BROOKS GHOST 15

Brooksrunning.com **£130.00**

The most established of the neutral cushioned shoes featured here, the Ghost 15 takes a good shoe and manages to make it slightly better.

The cushioning now uses the brand's DNA Loft v2 foam; a blend of rubber, air and a less dense foam to provide a midsole that feels just a touch softer and with a little more bounce than before.

The ride remains very stable – perhaps a little more so than the previous model – yet not too stiff or rigid. It's a smooth, very balanced, ride.

The engineered air mesh upper is breathable and, as always, a great fit. It's a very accommodating design, too, coping with various foot shapes well.

This is currently the best value all-round top performer in this category.

ON CLOUDSURFER

On-running.com **£150.00**

Featuring the latest version of On's Cloudtec cushioning – Cloudtech Phase – this model features cloud elements that compress and overlap with each other in a domino-like effect. Using this arrangement of clouds, the Helion foam and the removal of the previously used Speedboard has created the smoothest riding On running shoe to date.

The Cloudsurfer instantly feels softer than any of On's other models and is easy to get along with. The ride is soft and smooth with an upper that's equally inviting.

A new, Dope-Dying process is used in colouring the upper, which saves 95 per cent of the water used in the manufacturing process, while all the polyester used is recycled.

Even with the high volume of cushioning, the shoe comes in at just 245g (UK size 8) and with the great On fit, the shoe almost disappears around the foot.

The Cloudsurfer can tackle any pace and distance, making it a versatile choice for a wide range of runners.

LULULEMON

Lululemon.co.uk

SENSEKNIT COMPOSITE

Running Jacket - £198.00

The SenseKnit range of apparel uses a seamless technology to balance warmth and breathability, regardless of the level of activity. In terms of comfort this jacket is second to none and it will quickly become your go-to item, whatever the weather.

Feature-packed, the jacket has thoughtfully considered everything you'll need to be comfortable as you work out.

The tailored hood creates a perfect fit and includes a ponytail exit at the back, while thumbholes create mitts in the sleeves for the cold and the hem has drop-in pockets which are perfect for gels and other small items.

The jacket features all-round reflectivity and four-way stretch panels to help create the perfect fit.

High-Rise Running Tight – £168.00

These tights have a flattering high-rise waist band for both a stylish and extremely comfortable fit. There's a rear zip pocket to keep items secure, as well as stretch, drop-in pockets on the waistband.

A neat gripper inside the waist maintains a perfect fit and zippers at the ankle aid easy removal. These are possibly the nicest running tights we've ever tried.

JLAB

EPICAIR SPORT ANC

Uk.jlab.com **£99.99**

The music keeps on playing with these smart active noise cancelling earbuds. A wireless or USB charging case ensures up to 70 hours of playback time, while the earbuds being sweatproof means you can train as hard as you like.

Users can customise the amount of noise cancelling depending on your training environment to either block external noise or allow the sound of traffic etc in the "Be Aware" mode to keep you safe while on the roads. The over-the-ear clip is another feature we like as it ensures the buds stay securely in place.

BEYOND

INSULATED DOUBLE WALL SHAKER

Beyondshakers.com **£19.99**

This premium shaker takes things to the next level with double-walled insultation to keep contents hot or cold. A capacity of 735ml is large enough for most people's nutritional needs and the vacuum insulation ensures long-lasting temperature control. The food grade stainless steel is easy to clean and there's internal volume marking for easy mixing. The leak-proof cap and drinking spout make it as practical as it is stylish.

MAREE

SOLIDARITY HIGH-IMPACT SPORTS BRA

Maaree.com **£68.00**

A good bra is every bit as important as good footwear when it comes to running and any high intensity exercise.

The Maaree brand are one of the best around, winning countless awards for their high-impact products. Featuring their own Overband Technology, this adjustable band offers enhanced support and reduces bounce.

Available in 43 different sizes to ensure a perfect fit, the bra also features a broad chest band to reduce digging in. It can also be worn as a versatile stand-alone garment, making it a versatile addition to your workout wardrobe.

BOB & BRAD

C2 MASSAGE GUN

Bobandbrad.com **£89.99**

Despite its lightweight design, this massage gun manages to deliver a high-torque 3200rpm. The deep percussion action with five speeds and five different heads can target any body part with a tailored massage to help increase circulation, reduce muscle soreness and improve recovery. It's quick and easy to charge via USB, has a long battery life and is super-quiet when in use, meaning you can never be far away from some active recovery.

ON

On-running.com

TANK-T

£60.00

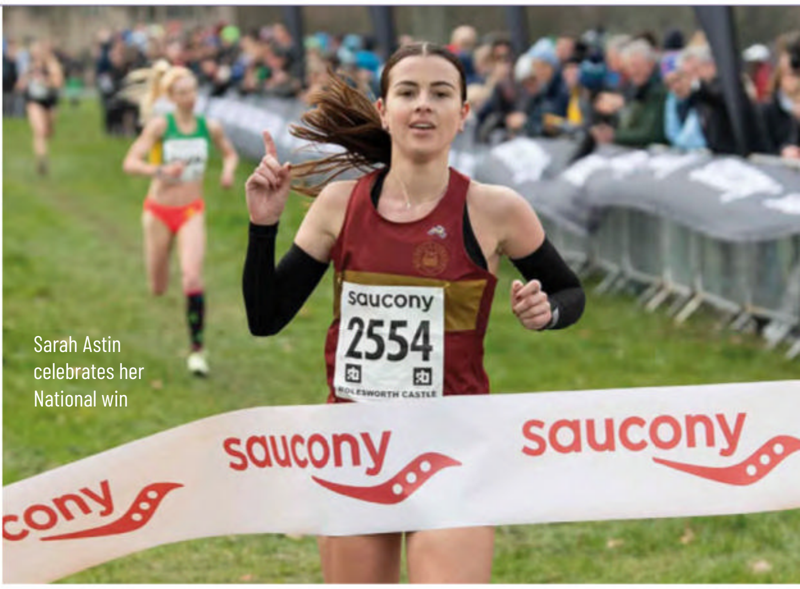
Super sleek and ultra-light, this singlet is made to go fast. The Japanese fabric is finished in an ultra-minimalist design for a fuss-free fit that's perfect for race day.

RACE SHORTS

£70.00

When every second counts these ultra-light shorts are designed to be distraction-free and light as a feather. The highly breathable fabric features the classic split leg design for the ultimate race feel.

RESULTS ROUND-UP



Sarah Astin celebrates her National win

PHOTO BY GARY MITCHELL

OVERSEAS

AUSTRALIA
WORLD CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS
Bathurst, February 18

Men: 1 J Kiplimo (UGA) 29:17; 2 B Aregawi (ETH) 29:26; 3 J Cheptegei UGA 29:37; 4 G Kamworor KEN 29:37; 5 K Kandie KEN 29:57; 6 D Simiyu KEN 30:01; 7 S Sawe KEN 30:04; 8 R Kwizéra BDI 30:06; 9 H Amare (ETH) 30:10; 10 M Tuemay (ETH) 30:11; 76 ZAK MAHAMED 34:05
TEAM: 1 KEN 22; 2 ETH 33; 3 UGA 37
U20: 1 I Kipkirui KEN 24:29; 2 R Kipkorir KEN 24:30; 3 B Diribi (ETH) 24:31; 18 EDWARD BIRD 26:10; 26 JACOB DEACON 26:44; 28 LUKE BIRDSEYE 26:52; 48 SAM MILLS 28:46
TEAM: 1 KEN 22; 2 ETH 23; 3 USA 81; 4 RSA 115; 5 GBR 120
Women: 1 B Chebet KEN 33:48; 2 T Gebreselama (ETH) 33:56; 3 A Ngetich KEN 34:00; 4 G Loibach KEN 34:13; 5 F Tefay (ETH) 34:30; 6 H Feysa (ETH) 34:36; 7 P Chesang UGA 34:42; 8 E Jebitok KEN 34:45; 9 E Chebet KEN 34:49; 10 S Chesang (UGA) 34:58; 24 ABBIE DONNELLY 35:53; 25 AMELIA QUIRK 35:56; 36 POPPY TANK 36:47; 52 MEGAN KEITH 38:32
TEAM: 1 KEN 16; 2 ETH 25; 3 UGA 41; 4 AUS 92; 5 USA 103; 6 GBR 137
U20: 1 S Getachew (ETH) 20:53; 2 M Eisa (ETH) 21:00; 3 P Kosgei KEN 21:01; 23 REBECCA FLAHERTY 23:11; 24 HANNAH RYDING 23:18; 33 ZOE GILBODY 23:51; 40 MEGAN HARRIS 24:32; TEAM: 1 ETH 15; 2 KEN 22; 3 USA 54; 4 UGA 75; 5 JPN 76; 6 GBR 120
Mixed relay: 1 KEN 23:14; 2 ETH 23:21; 3 AUS 23:50; 4 RSA 23:50; 5 USA 24:32; 6 GBR (JOE WIGFIELD, ALEXANDRA BELL, CALLUM ELSON, ALEXANDRA MILLARD) 24:39

FRANCE
Liévin, February 15

Lamecha Girma won the 3000m in a world record 7:23.81, with Mohamed Katir setting a European record 7:24.68 in second.
Men: 60: 1 F Omanyala (KEN) 6.54 (Afr rec); 2 L Jacobs (ITA) 6.57; 3 A Cissé (CIV) 6.59. **400:** 1 K Warholm (NOR) 45.51. **800:** 1 B Robert 1:46.78; 2 E Crestan (BEL) 1:47.23; 3 A Tuka BIH 1:47.86; 4 A Kramer SWE 1:47.97. B: 1 T van Diepen (NED) 1:46.36; 2 M Zahafi (MAR) 1:46.64. **1500:** 1,J Ingebrigtsen (NOR) 3:32.38; 2 A Habz 3:35.27; 3 A Mechaal (ESP) 3:36.55; 4 M Rozmys (POL) 3:36.96; 5 T Lemi (ETH) 3:37.42. **3000:** 1 L Girma (ETH) 7:23.81 (world rec); 2 M Katir ESP 7:24.68 (Eur rec); 3, J Krop KEN 7:31.35; 4 B Balew (BRN 7:33.42; 5 G Fisher USA 7:35.82; 6 T Haile (ETH) 7:37.96; 7 M Temoii (KEN U20) 7:39.38. **60H:** 1 G Holloway USA 7.39 (7.40 ht); 2 D Roberts USA 7.43; 3 P Martinot-Lagarde 7.62.
PV: 1 M Duplantis (SWE) 6.01; 2 C Stecchi (ITA) 5.82 (rec); eq3 K Marschall (AUS)/J Wooten (USA) 5.82, 5, C Nilsen (USA) 5.82. **LJ:** 1 M Tentóglou (GRE); 2 T Montler (SWE) 8.06
Women: 400: 1 F Bol (NED) 50.20; 2 A Kiełbasinska (POL) 51.40. **B:** 1 N Kaczmarek (POL) 50.90 (rec); 2 L Klaver (NED) 51.42. **800:** 1 KEELY HODGKINSON 1:57.71; 2 M Moraa (KEN) 2:00.61; 3 N Yarigo (BEN) 2:01.47. **1500:** 1 G Tsegay (ETH) 3:57.47; 2 W Meshesha (ETH) 4:02.01; 3 F Hailu (ETH) 4:02.47. **3000:** 1 D Welteji (ETH) 8:34.84; 2, L Hailu (ETH) 8:35.15; 3 M Alem (ETH) 8:39.03; 4 S Chelangat (UGA) 8:41.16 (rec). **PV:** 1 K Moon USA 4.83; 2 T Sutej (SLO) 4.78); 3 A Newman (CAN) 4.71. **TJ:** 1 L Povea (CUB) 14.81; 2 L Pérez (CUB) 14.65

Clermont-Ferrand, February 25

With his 60th six-metre jump, Mondo Duplantis achieved his sixth world record as his 6.22m won him a high class competition.
Men: PV: 1 M Duplantis SWE 6.22 (world record); 2 K Marschall (AUS) 5.91; 3 M Vloon (NED 5.91; 4 T Collet 5.81

JAMAICA
Kingston, Jamaica, February 25

Finishing third behind Ackeem Blake and Oblique Seville (both 6.42), Zharnel Hughes recorded the fastest-ever UK outdoor 60m race time of 6.45, though both Dwain Chambers (6.41) and Linford Christie (6.43) have slightly faster split times recorded during World Championships 100m races.
Men: 60 (0.9): 1 A Blake 6.42; 2 O Seville 6.42; 3 ZHARNEL HUGHES 6.45; 4 Y Blake 6.45. Ht 3 (1.6): 1 HUGHES 6.52
Women: 60 (2.0): 1 T Clayton 7.02

JAPAN
TOKYO MARATHON, Japan, March 5

Rosemary Wanjiru of Kenya went sixth all-time as her strong finish saw her secure victory in 2:16:28 with Tsehay Gemechu finishing second in 2:16:56.

An exciting men's race saw with Deso Gamisa edging Huseyidin Mohamed. In fifth, Canadian Cam Levins set a North American record of 2:05:36.
Men: Mar: 1 D Gelmisa (ETH) 2:05:22; 2 H Mohamed (ETH) 2:05:22; 3 T Getachew (ETH) 2:05:25; 4 T Kibiego (KEN) 2:05:32; 5 C Levins (CAN) 2:05:36 (rec); 6 T Abate (ETH) 2:05:38; 7 I Yamashita 2:05:51; 8 K Sonota 2:05:59; 9 S Osako 2:06:13; 10 H Inoue 2:07:09; 11 S Kissa (UGA) 2:07:16; 12 V Raimoi (KEN) 2:07:23.
Women: Mar: 1 R Wanjiru (KEN) 2:16:28; 2 T Gemechu (ETH) 2:16:56; 3 A Bekere (ETH) 2:19:11; 4 W Edesa (ETH) 2:20:13; 5 B Saina USA 2:21:40; 6 Mi Matsuda 2:21:44; 7 A Hosoda 2:22:08; 8 L Flanagan USA 2:26:08; 9 K Morita 2:26:31; 10 Y Abe 2:28:20; 18 RACHEL HODGKINSON 2:36:44

NETHERLANDS
DUTCH CHAMPIONSHIPS, Apeldoorn, February 18-19

Femke Bol set a world record of 49.26 for the 400m indoors to easily better the 49.59 by Jarmila Kratochvílová set in 1982 which was the longest-standing track world record.
Men: 400: 1 I Boers 45.72. HJ: 1 D Amels 2.24. PV: 1 M Vloon 5.82
Women: 400: 1 F Bol 49.26 (world rec); 2 L Klaver 50.43

TURKEY
EUROPEAN INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIPS, Istanbul, Turkey, March 2-5

Men: 60: 1 S Ceccarelli (ITA) 6.48 (6.47 SF); 2 L Jacobs (ITA) 6.50; 3 H Larsson (SWE) 6.53 (6.56 SF); 4 D Kopec (POL) 6.53; 5 J Volko (SVK) 6.57; 6 JEREMIAH AZU 6.58 (6.56 SF); 8 REECE PRESCOD 6.64 (6.52 SF). In SF: 5 EUGENE AMO-DADZIE 6.64. **400:** 1 K Warholm (NOR 45.35 (45.43 SF); 2 J Watrin (BEL) 45.44; 3 C Bengström (SWE) 45.77; 4 O Husillos (ESP) 46.24 (45.86 SF); 5 M Krsek (CZE) 46.48 (46.03 SF). **800:** 1 A Ben (ESP) 1:47.34 (1:46.82 SF); 2 B Robert (FRA) 1:47.34 (1:47.11 SF); 3 E Crestan (BEL) 1:47.65 (1:46.84 SF); 4 A Tuka (BIH) 1:47.90 (1:47.22 ht); 5 A Kramer (SWE) 1:48.15 (1:47.11 SF); 6 GUY LEARMONTH 1:48.46 (1:47.50 SF, 1:47.51 ht). **1500:** 1 J Ingebrigtsen (NOR 3:33.95; 2 NEIL GOURLEY 3:34.23; 3 A Habz (FRA) 3:35.39; 4 J Gómez (ESP) 3:38.11; 5 P Arese (ITA) 3:38.91; 6 L Gilavert (FRA) 3:39.84; 11 GEORGE MILLS 3:51.28. **3000:** 1 Ingebrigtsen (NOR) 7:40.32; 2 A Mechaal (ESP) 7:41.75; 3 E Bibic (SRB) 7:44.03; 4 D McElhinney (IRL) 7:44.72; 5 C Grethen (LUX) 7:46.65; 6 T Verbaandert (NED) 7:47.24; 8 JAMES WEST 7:48.22; 9 JACK ROWE 7:48.31. **60H:** 1 J Joseph (SUI) 7.41 (7.50 SF); 2 J Szymanski (POL 7.56 (7.54SF); 3 J Kwaou-Mathey (FRA) 7.59; 4 L Simonelli (ITA 7.59; 5 P Dal Molin (ITA 7.62; 6 K Kiljan (POL) 7.63; 7 DAVID KING 7.71 (7.68 SF). in SF: E Llopis ESP 7.58. **HJ:** 1 D Amels (NED) 2.31; 2 A Protsenko (UKR) 2.29; 3 T Carmoy (BEL 2.29; 4 T Potye (GER) 2.26; 5 N Kobielski (POL) 2.26; 6 C Falocchi (ITA) 2.19
PV: 1 S Guttormsen (NOR) 5.80; eq2 Piotr Lisek (POL)/E Karalís (GRE) 5.80; 4 T Blach (GER) 5.80; 5 E Cormant (FRA) 5.70 (5.75q); 6 C Stecchi (ITA) 5.70 (5.75q). **LJ:** 1 M Tentóglou (GRE) 8.30; 2 T Montler (SWE) 8.19; 3 G Bitan (ROU 8.00 (8.03q); 4 B Saraboukov (BUL U20) 7.97; 5 R Juska (CZE) 7.94; 6 J Guerra (ESP) 7.84 (7.99q). **TJ:** 1 P Pichardo (POR) 17.60 (17.48q); 2 N Andrikópoulos (GRE) 16.58; 3 M Hess (GER) 16.57 (16.67q); 4 T Pereira (POR 16.51; 5 N Babayev (AZE 16.50; 6 T Bocchi (ITA) 16.39 (16.47q). **SP:** 1 Z Weir (ITA) 22.06; 2 T Stanek (CZE 21.90; 3 R Kokoshko (UKR) 21.84; 4 F Mihaljevic (CRO 21.43; 5 B Bertemes (LUX) 21.00; 6 M Thomsen (NOR) 20.66 (20.71q). **Hep:** 1 K Mayer (FRA) 6392 (6.86, 7.47 16.32 2.04 7.78 5.20 2:45.72; 2 S Skotheim (NOR) 6318 7.05 7.60 14.09 2.19, 8.05 5.00 2:37.82; 3 R Lillemets (EST) 6079 (7.05 6.91 14.59 2.07 8.05 5.10 2:39.50); 4 M Eitel (GER) 6047; 5 J Ureña (ESP) 5966; 6 O Kopecky (CZE) 5792. **4x400:** 1 BEL 3:05.63) 2 FRA 3:06.52) 3. NED 3:06.59; 4 ESP 3:06.87; 5 GBR 3:08.61 (B HIGGINS 47.46, J BRIER 46.99, S REARDON 47.75, L DAVEY 46.41); 6 TUR 3:09.41
Women: 60: 1 M Kambundji (SUI) 7.00 (7.05 SF); 2 E Swoboda (POL) 7.09; 3 DARYLL NEITA 7.12 (7.07 SF); 4 R Rosius (BEL) 7.15; 5 A Martínez (POR) 7.17; 6 D Nkansa (BEL) 7.19. in SF: 6 Asha Philip GBR 7.35. **400:** 1 F Bol (NED) 49.95; 2 L Klaver (NED) 50.57; 3 A Kielbasinska (POL) 51.25; 4 S Gogl-Walli (AUT) 51.73; 5 L Vondrová (CZE) 51.73; 6 T Petrzilková (CZE) 52.81 (52.14 ht). **800:** 1 KEELY HODGKINSON 1:58.66; 2 A Horvat (SLO) 2:00.54; 3 A Raharolahy (FRA) 2:00.85; 4 L Ibarzabal (ESP) 2:00.87; 5 A Werro (SUI U20) 2:00.91; 6 L Hoffmann (SUI) 2:01.22. In SF: 6 ISABELLE BOFFEY 2:03.94 (2:03.24 ht). **1500:** 1 LAURA MUIR 4:03.40; 2 C Bobocea (ROU) 4:03.76; 3. S Ennaoui (POL) 4:04.06; 4 E Guerrero (ESP) 4:04.86; 5 KATIE SNOWDEN 4:07.86; 6 M Freitas (POR) 4:07.95; 11 ELLIE BAKER 4:10.96 (4:10.65 ht). **3000:** 1 Hanna Klein (GER) 8:35.87; 2 K Klosterhalefn (GER) 8:36.50; 3 MELISSA COURTNEY-BRYANT 8:41.19; 4 N Battocletti (ITA) 8:44.96; 5 HANNAH NUTTALL 8:46.30; 6 M Koster (NED) 8:47.17.
60H: 1 R Hurske (FIN) 7.79 (7.86 SF); 2 N Visser (NED) 7.84 (7.88 ht); 3 D Kambundji (SUI) 7.91; 4 M Graversgaard (DEN 7.92; 5 L Bapte (FRA) 7.97 (7.91 SF); 6 S Lavin (IRL) 8.03 (7.99 SF). **HJ:** 1 Y Mahuchikh (UKR 1.98; 2 B Weerman (NED 1.96; 3 K Tabashnyk (UKR) 1.94; 4 A Topic (SRB U20) 1.94; 5 Y Levchenko (UKR) 1.94; 6 C Honsel (GER) 1.91; eq7 MORGAN LAKE 1.86 (1.91q). **PV:** 1 W Murto (FIN 4.80; 2 T Sutej (SLO) 4.75; 3 A Svabíková (CZE 4.70; 4 K Stefanídi (GRE) 4.60; 5 M Chevrier (FRA) 4.55; 6 Angelica Moser (SUI)

For our full, up to date results service from across athletics, don't

4.45 (4.55q). **LJ:** 1 JAZMIN SAWYERS 7.00 (6.70, x, x, 6.76. 7.00, 6.84) (6.71q); 2 L Iapichino (ITA) 6.97; 3 I Vuleta (SRB) 6.91 (6.98q); 4 M Mihambo (GER) 6.83 (6.87q); 5 A Rotaru-Kottmann (ROU) 6.62; 6 A Kälin (SUI) 6.61 (6.70q). **TJ:** 1 T Danismaz (TUR) 14.31; 2 D Derkach (ITA 14.20; 3 P Mamona (POR) 14.16; 4 O Cestonaro (ITA) 14.08; 5 N Filipic (SLO) 13.92 (13.94q); 6 D Kilty (LTU) 13.92. **SP:** 1 A Dongmo (POR) 19.76; 2 S Gambetta (GER) 18.83;3 F Roos (SWE) 18.42; 4 J Include (POR) 18.33; 5 J Schilder (NED) 18.29 (19.18q); 6. A Márton (HUN) 18.28. **Pen:** 1 N Thiam (BEL) 5014 (WR) (8.23 1.92 15.54 6.59, 2:13.60 ; 2 A Sulek (POL) 5014 (8.21 1.89 13.89 6.62, 2:07.17; 3 N Vidts (BEL) 4823 (8.21 1.83, 14.12 6.55, 2:14.52; 4 S Dokter (NED) 4499; 5. X Krizsán (HUN) 4493; 6 HOLLY MILLS 4451 (8.34 1.77 12.99 5.85,2:12.58); 9 K O'Connor (IRL) 4353. **4x400:** 1 NED 3:25.66 (Klaver 50.67, Saalberg 52.27, Peeters 53.14, Bol 49.58); 2 ITA 3:28.61; 3. POL 3:29.94; 4 CZE 3:31.26; 5 IRL 3:32.61 Mawdsley 51.15); 6 GBR 3:32.61 Kelly 54.29, McAulay 51.98. Kendall 52.84, Abichi 53.54)

USA

Sound Running The Ten, San Juan Capistrano, California, USA, March 4-5

Eilish McColgan narrowly broke Paula Radcliffe's 21-year-old UK 10,000m record with a superb run of 30:00.86 and was followed home by Alicia Monson's US record of 30:03.82. Woody Kincaid won the men's race in 27:06.37.

Men: 10,000: 1 W Kincaid 27:06.37; 2 J Klecker 27:07.57; 3 A Kioko (KEN) 27:23.84; 4 C Mantz 27:25.30; 5 J Raess (SUI) 27:26.40; 6 R Tazawa (JPN) 27:28.04; 7 N Voigt GER 27:30.01; 8 S Chelanga 27:38.02; 9 L Grijalva (GUA) 27:42.56 (rec). B: 2 THOMAS GEORGE 28:14.41

Women: 10,000: 1 EILISH McCOLGAN GBR 30:00.86 (rec); 2 A Monson 30:03.82 (rec); 3 E Henes 30:48.26; 4 N Rogers 30:48.69; 5 F O'Keeffe 30:55.05; 6 L Galván (MEX) 31:04.08 (rec); 7 D Scott Efurd RSA 31:14.00

Pocatello, February 18

Ryan Crouser added a centimetre to his world shot put record with a throw of 23.38m.

Men: SP: 1 R Crouser 23.38 (world rec) (23.38, 22.48, x, 22.04, 22.60, 22.26)

MILLROSE GAMES
New York, February 11

Josh Kerr set a 3000m record of 7:33.47 in going close to the UK record, Laura Muir won the mile and Neil Gourley ran one of the world's fastest ever indoor miles with his 3:49.46 behind Yared Nuguse's North American record of 3:47.38.

Men: 60: 1 C Coleman 6.47; 2 T Williams JAM 6.59; 3 J Lyles 6.59. **400:** 1 J Richards (TTO) 45.84. **800:** 1 N Kibet (KEN) 1:44.98 (U20 rec); 2 I Harris 1:45.64; 3 C Murphy 1:46.83; 4 KYLE LANGFORD GBR 1:46.98.**1M:** 1 Nuguse 3:47.38 (N.Am rec) (1500m 3:33.22) 2 NEIL GOURLEY 3:49.46 (3:34.58); 3 O Hoare (AUS) 3:50.83 (Oce rec) (3:34.78): 4 S Tanner NZL 3:51.70; 5 M García (ESP) 3:51.79 (rec). **3000:** 1 JOSH KERR 7:33.47 (Scot rec); 2 L Grijalva (GUA) 7:33.86 (rec; 3 J Klecker 7:34.14; 4 C Teare 7:34.70; 5 J Raess (SUI) 7:35.24 (rec); 6 G Beamish NZL 7:36.22 (rec); 7 D Jacobs 7:36.89; 8 S Parsons GER 7:39.94. **SP:** 1 R Crouser 22.58; 2 J Kovacs 21.34

Women: 60: 1 A Hobbs 7.04; 2 T Davis 7.08. 300: 1 A Steiner 35.54 (rec); 2 B Brown 36.13; 3 L Anderson JAM 36.68. **600:** 1 Ajee' Wilson 1:24.85; 2 S Little 1:26.16; 3 Allie Wilson 1:26.40. **1M:** 1 LAURA MUIR 4:20.15 (4:03.07); 2 J Andrews 4:20.88 (4:03.18); 3 KATIE SNOWDEN 4:21.19 (4:03.98); 4 L Stafford CAN 4:22.72; 9 JEMMA REEKIE 4:28.91 (4:08.03). **3000:** 1 A Monson 8;25.05 (N.Am rec); 2 W Morgan 8:30.13; 3 K Touhy 8:35.20; 4 E Henes 8:36.48; 5 E Cranny 8:37.17. **60H:** 1 D Charlton (BAH) 7.91; 2 T Marshall 7.94; 3 S Nelvis 7.96; 4 N Ali 7.97. **PV:** 1 K Moon 4.81; 2 B Williams 4.76; 3 K Stefanídi (GRE) 4.62. **SP:** 1 C Ealey 20.02; 2 S Mitton (CAN) 19.52; 3 M Ewen 19.49

CROSS COUNTRY

SAUCONY ENGLISH NATIONAL CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS, Bolesworth Castle, February 25

There were inaugural senior titles for Jamie Kingston (improving from 15th in last year's junior race) and Sarah Astin.

Jack Gray was a close second as Leeds won the team gold, while former winner Gemma Steel was second as she continued her return to form and led Charnwood's women to the team gold.

Pick of the junior winners were under-17 Innes FitzGerald, who won her first National title by almost a minute, while European champion Will Barnicoat won the under-20 title by 47 seconds as he took his third successive victory.

Men (12km): 1 J Kingston (Ton) 36:01; 2 J Gray (C&C) 36:07; 3 D Stone (SB) 36:32; 4 R Allen (Leeds C) 36:33; 5 J Steward (Salf) 36:38; 6 C Wheeler (MKDP) 36:40; 7 J Dickinson (Leeds C) 36:43; 8 S Moakes (Notts) 36:44; 9 C Elson (C&C) 36:46; 10 B Alcock (Bed C) 36:50; 11 C Avery (Morp, M35) 36:56; 12 G Rush (Leeds C, M40) 36:58; 13 A Leprêtre (High) 36:59; 14 G Wheeler (MKDP) 37:01; 15 K Reilly (Ton) 37:08; 16 J Millar (B&W) 37:10; 17 J Davies (Read) 37:12; 18 P Sesemann (Leeds C) 37:16; 19 K Taylor (B&W) 37:21; 20 J Allen (High) 37:31; 21 M Pearce (SB) 37:32; 22 B Rushman (Herts P) 37:32; 23 A Howard (Ton) 37:34; 24 J Escalante-Phillips (C&C) 37:35; 25 D James (Western Tempo) 37:35; 26 E Bovingdon (Leeds C) 37:37; 27 M Campion (Notts) 37:37; 28 A Watson (Notts, M45) 37:40; 29 R Slade (Chilt) 37:46; 30 M Wharton (Sale) 37:53; 31 J Morrow (Oxf U) 37:54; 32 C Charleston (AFD) 37:55; 33 H Brodie (Bed C) 37:55; 34 B Cole (Ton, M35) 37:57; 35 S Eglen (AFD) 37:57; 36 D Hallam (W&SV) 37:59; 37 C Smith (Hunts) 38:01; 38 E Chuck (Dulw, M35) 38:01; 39 G Brown (Chilt) 38:03; 40 E Shepherd (WG&EL) 38:03; 41 O Lockley (Leeds C) 38:04; 42 F Slemeck (HW) 38:05; 43 L Gratton (Ruge, M35) 38:10; 44 A Teuten (Soton) 38:12; 45 J Teagle (Leic Tc) 38:13; 46 R Poolman (Camb U) 38:14; 47 G Beardmore (Worc) 38:18; 48 T Keen (C&C) 38:18; 49 N Shreeve (C&C, M35) 38:18; 50 J Woodcock-Shaw (Leeds C) 38:19

M40: 2 G Tomlinson (Chorlton) 38:20; 3 J Eves (Bed C) 38:23. M45: 2 M Barnes (Sale) 41:13; 3 M Hill (Leeds C) 41:31. **M50:** 1 T Hartley (Notts) 41:00; 2 D Norman (W&B) 41:59; 3 S Doyle (Vale R) 42:59. **M55:** 1 P Chritchlow (Beau L) 44:07; 2 P Leybourne (Salf) 44:12; 3 D Hamilton (S'port W) 45:03. **M60:** 1 G Saker (Ton) 49:08; 2 D Ogden (S Lon) 49:57; 3 M Hargreaves (Shrews) 50:03. **M65:** 1 C Rhodes (Ches TC) 48:44; 2 A Clarke (UKRunChat) 54:04; 3 C Morrison (Sinf) 54:35. **M70:** 1 D Alcock (Trent) 57:35

TEAM: 1 Leeds 108; 2 Cambridge & C 177; 3 Tonbridge 214; 4 Highgate 249; 5 Bristol & W 301; 6 Bedford & C 397

U20 (10km): 1 W Barnicoat (AFD) 31:40; 2 B Brown (Soton) 32:27; 3 J Ponter (Taun) 32:36; 4 F Jennings (Bide) 32:49; 5 L Small (Ashf) 32:58; 6 G Couttie (H'gate) 33:06; 7 N Campion (Bed C) 33:33; 8 E Coutts (Ton) 33:34; 9 L Davis (Western Tempo) 33:37; 10 E Smith (Newc S) 33:42

TEAM: 1 Tonbridge 70; 2 AFD 104; 3 Wirral 152

U17 (6km): 1 H Dover (SB) 20:39; 2 J Dargan (AFD) 20:46; 3 W Rabjohns (Poole) 20:56; 4 J Stevens (Inv EK) 21:03; 5 L McCay (Liv H) 21:11; 6 A Adams (Strat) 21:15; 7 S Hughes (Roth) 21:21; 8 Q Miell-Ingram (Rad) 21:24; 9 C Norman (S Lon) 21:26; 10 J Hughes (Roth) 21:41

TEAM: 1 AFD 140; 2 Tonbridge 159; 3 Cambridge & C 195

U15 (4km): 1 O Ulfig (W&B) 14:40; 2 G Wilson (Clee) 14:41; 3 M Clark (Prest) 14:42; 4 N Scott-Donkin (Hunts) 14:43; 5 J Marwood (Warr) 14:55; 6 E Grime (Salf) 14:56; 7 F Goodman (B&H) 15:00; 8 J Sanderson (Sett) 15:03; 9 J Scanes (B&B) 15:04; 10 J Nugent (Mans) 15:04

TEAM: 1 Trafford 156; 2 Norwich 191; 3 Tonbridge 214

U13 (3km): 1 T Thake (Hallam) 9:51; 2 N Homer (W&SV) 10:04; 3 A White (Traff) 10:15; 4 E Sparey (B&W) 10:22; 5 E Withnall (Burt) 10:22; 6 W Delamere (S'port W) 10:23; 7 F Jones (W&B) 10:25; 8 J Smith (Mil K) 10:31; 9 C Holmes (Herne H) 10:41; 10 F Gibson (M&M) 10:43

TEAM: 1 Herne H 95; 2 Hercules W 122; 3 Bristol & W 227

Women (8km): 1 S Astin (Belg) 29:28; 2 G Steel (Charn, W35) 29:33; 3 N Bridson Hubbard (B&B) 29:43; 4 L McNeil (Hallam) 30:04; 5 R Murray (Bed C) 30:09; 6 S Tarver (Wirr) 30:17; 7 P Williams (Hallam) 30:25; 8 J Emmerson (Cov) 30:29; 9 G Grgec (Herne H) 30:33; 10 S Wallis (Linc W) 30:36; 11 O Mason (Bord H) 30:49; 12 M Atkinson (Charn) 30:51; 13 L Heyes (Hallam) 30:55; 14 E Curran (Leeds C) 30:55; 15 G Malir (Leeds C) 31:02; 16 B Garland (Chich) 31:04;

TONBRIDGE AC
saucony
5870

Jamie Kingtson takes the acclaim after becoming National champion

PHOTO BY GARY MITCHELL

forget to head online and visit athleticsweekly.com

17 C McKnespiey (Bord H) 31:05; 18 P Stone (M'bro) 31:07; 19 P Barker (Ton) 31:10; 20 L Small (AFD) 31:12; 21 A Samuels (W&B) 31:15; 22 H Dixon (Camb H) 31:21; 23 N Scott (AFD) 31:27; 24 J Potter (Charn, W40) 31:29; 25 N Brown (AFD) 31:34; 26 H Viner (High) 31:34; 27 C Lambert (M'bro) 31:34; 28 A Clement (B&B, W35) 31:40; 29 K Estlea (AFD) 31:42; 30 H Seager (Charn) 31:43; 31 C Baker (B&W) 31:46; 32 S Monk (G&G) 31:48; 33 K Olding (TVH) 31:49; 34 E Apsley (THH) 31:49; 35 H Townsend (Leeds C) 31:50; 36 B Murray (THH) 31:56; 37 D Corradi (Sutt) 31:58; 38 B Penty (Knaves, W35) 32:01; 39 L Hall (AFD) 32:01; 40 C Hammett (THH) 32:04; 41 R Jones (Salf) 32:05; 42 H Hall (Win) 32:10; 43 M Marchant (Camb H) 32:17; 44 R Harrison (Linc W) 32:18; 45 R Brown (Chorlton) 32:21; 46 K Entwistle (B&W) 32:21; 47 A Leake (Leeds C) 32:28; 48 S Willhoit (Shrews) 32:32; 49 N Collier (Bir) 32:33; 50 K Moulds (Vale R) 32:33

W40: 2 J Marsden (Cheshire Dragons) 32:48; 3 E Renondeau (Vale R) 33:04. W45: 1 C Parsons (Cheshire Dragons) 33:37; 2 C Martin (Tel) 34:05; 3 S Murphy (Vale R) 34:34. **W50:** 1 K Stevenson (Tyne Br) 34:42; 2 M Vernon (Stoke) 36:13; 3 S Cumber (Hal) 36:58. **W55:** 1 C Elms (Kent) 35:29; 2 S Russell (High) 37:07; 3 S Avery (Cheshire Dragons) 37:52,. **W60:** 1 J Rashleigh (Horw) 38:14; 2 J Collins (Wig D) 40:53. **W65:** 1 J Kidd (Kenil) 41:18. **W70:** 1 M MacDonald (Camb H) 50:06

TEAM: 1 Charnwood 68; 2 AFD 97; 3 Hallamshire 102; 4 Leeds 111; 5 Thames H&H 166; 6 Belgrave 194; 7 Blackheath 206; 8 Vale R 260; 9 Bristol & W 347; 10 Herne H 384

U20 (6km): 1 B Wood (Salis) 23:18; 2 M Gadsby (Norw) 23:22; 3 L Neate (Win) 23:32; 4 L Huxley (Prest) 23:38; 5 H Reynolds (Norw) 23:44; 6 P Craig-McFeely (Herne H) 23:45; 7 E Weir (HW) 23:56; 8 K Stilwell (Wyc P) 24:07; 9 A Garner (AFD) 24:08; 10 E Whitaker (H'gate) 24:15

TEAM: 1 Norwich 64; 2 AFD 65; 3 B&B 116

U17 (5km): 1 I FitzGerald (Exe) 17:11; 2 Z Gilbody (W&SV) 18:04; 3 R Flaherty (Bing) 18:15; 4 P Gill (St Alb) 18:30; 5 L Russell (High) 18:38; 6 A Lane (Wharf) 18:39; 7 S Nicholls (Wells) 18:40; 8 E Nicholson (S'oaks) 18:42; 9 H Haldane (Read) 18:57; 10 L Wellsted (Col H) 18:59

TEAM: 1 Cambridge & C 131; 2 Wreake & SV 172; 3 WSEH 203

U15 (4km): 1 S King (W&SV) 16:15; 2 I McGowan (Banb) 16:26; 3 L Belshaw (Col H) 16:33; 4 O Forrest (B Beagles) 16:37; 5 G Igoe (Roth) 16:48; 6 H Cross (Liv H) 16:51; 7 K Webb (Mil K) 16:56; 8 K Pye (AFD) 17:03; 9 I Wharton (Warr) 17:05; 10 E Heavey (Warr) 17:06

TEAM: 1 Rotherham 85; 2 Liverpool 117; 3 Milton K 197

U13 (3km): 1 J March (Barn) 10:59; 2 K Scott (AFD) 11:01; 3 K Gorman (Chilt) 11:05; 4 I Buchanan (HY Runners) 11:09; 5 P Kershaw (BWF) 11:22; 6 I Harrison (HW) 11:25; 7 Z Allan (WSEH) 11:26; 8 M Robertson (AFD) 11:30; 9 E Birchall (Exe) 11:30; 10 A McDonagh (B&B) 11:31

TEAM: 1 AFD 49; 2 Wreake 102; 3 Chelmsford 122

NORTHERN IRELAND & ULSTER SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS, Derry, February 25

Men (12km): 1 F McNally (Phoe) 37:34; 2 A Milligan (NBH) 37:45; 3 N Johnston (Harrow) 37:55; 4 Z Hanna (Newc) 38:37; 5 G Crummy (Newry) 39:03; 6 C McMeechan (N Down) 39:07; 7 C McCaughey (NBH) 39:14; 8 N McCartan (E Down) 39:38; 9 M Lavery (NBH, U20) 39:51; 10 L Dinsmore (Anna) 39:52

M40: 1 L O'Hara (NBH) 41:06. M45: 1 N Weir (Willow) 42:16. M50: 1 E White (NBH) 42:39. M65: 1 N Mawhinney (Scrabo Striders) 50:48

Women (6km): 1 G Carson (Mid U) 20:59; 2 S Lavery (Beech) 22:32; 3 H Gilliland (Anna) 22:40; 4 E Monaghan (Ennis) 23:04; 5 C O'Connor (E Down, W35) 23:06; 6 S McDonald (Glenmore AC) 23:31; 7 A Gosling (Newc, W40) 23:39; 8 G McCrory (Stpl, W40) 23:42; 9 K Moore (N Down) 23:43; 10 L Cooke (Finn) 23:48

W40: 3 F McQuillan (N Down) 24:24. **W45:** 1 K Haniver (Stubb G) 24:453. **W50:** 1 A Perry (B'drain) 26:12. **W55:** 1 G Boyle (N Down) 28:44. W60: 1 M Slocum (Ward Park) 26:27. **W65:** 1 M Mackin (Drom) 29:37

LINDSAYS SCOTTISH NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS, Falkirk, February 25

Overall (10km): 1 L Rees (Fife) 32:09; 2 J Crowe (Centr) 32:15; 3 H Hickey (Centr) 32:45; 4 B Potrykus (WG&EL) 32:48; 5 S Stirling (Falk) 32:50; 6 L Oates (Shett) 32:54; 7 T Graham-Marr (Centr) 32:57; 8 J Burns (Glas C) 32:57; 9 R Gollan (Shett) 33:02; 10 A Craig (I'clyde) 33:06; 11 G Smith (Cambus) 33:07; 12 S Ghafari (High) 33:24; 13 C Graham (Lass) 33:28; 14 G Sheldon (Cambus) 33:31; 15 A Chepelin (Carnethy Hill Racing Club) 33:33; 16 C Phillip (Centr) 33:34; 17 F Stewart (Cambus, M35) 33:37; 18 M Abernethy (Fraser) 33:38; 19 M Ferguson (TVH) 33:39; 20 L Fanottoli (Centr) 33:50

M40: 1 D Hastie (Gala) 34:58; 2 M Doherty (I'clyde) 35:09. M45: 1 I Reid (Cambus) 38:22; 2 P Kieran (PH Racing) 38:39. **M50:** 1 R Paterson (I'clyde) 38:38; 2 D Roussias (Metro) 39:46. **M55:** 1 S Campbell (Cors) 41:27; 2 D Cross (Edin) 42:29. **M60:** 1 S Mackenzie (Cambus) 43:08; 2 J Mayers (Muss) 44:14

TEAM: 1 Centr 71; 2 Shett 105; 3 Cambus 133; 4 Cors 219; 5 I'clyde 268

U20 (6.8km): 1 M Knowles (L&M) 22:02; 2 R Martin (Centr) 22:17; 3 C Harper (Giff N) 22:31; 4 P Bradshaw (I'clyde) 22:37; 5 F Gilmour (Kilb) 22:40

TEAM: 1 Edin U 30; 2 Giff N 69; 3 Kilb 80

U17 (6.2km): 1 C Bell (Centr) 20:36; 2 R Marshall (Fife) 20:39; 3 C Shennan (Giff N) 20:47; 4 O MacDonald (Giff N) 20:54; 5 H McKay (A'deen) 21:01

TEAM: 1 Giff N 24; 2 E Loth 92; 3 Cambus 114

U15 (4.3km): 1 T Robin (Giff N) 14:43; 2 J Alexander (Gars) 14:45; 3 C Dick (Giff N) 14:45; 4 A Baird (Ross C) 14:51; 5 A Wilkinson (E Kilb) 14:54

TEAM: 1 Harm 57; 2 Giff N 61; 3 Falk VH 70

U13 (3.2km): 1 R Laing (VPCG) 11:53; 2 L Muir (Giff N) 11:59; 3 H MacMillan (Centr) 12:02; 4 C Nugent (Giff N) 12:08; 5 M Deery (Giff N) 12:11

TEAM: 1 Giff N 18; 2 Edin 94; 3 Centr 113

Women (10km): 1 S Adkin (Moorf) 37:15; 2 A Goodall (Edin) 37:23; 3 S Pennycook (Fife) 38:25; 4 S Green (Gala, W40) 38:34; 5 Z Pflug (Edin U HH) 38:43; 6 N Lang (C'thy) 38:52; 7 N Mulholland (I'clyde) 39:21; 8 S Brown (Edin) 39:37; 9 F Bunn (Abing) 39:40; 10 C MacDonald (Bella RR) 39:40; 11 K Dickson (Carnethy Hill Racing Club) 39:42; 12 E Mackinnon (Cambus) 39:49; 13 C Graves (High H) 40:03; 14 E Bell (Leeds C) 40:08; 15 F Ross (Falk, W35) 40:10; 16 M Crawford (Fife) 40:18; 17 E McNicol (Jag) 40:43; 18 A Wallace (Shett) 40:55; 19 G Black (VPCG) 41:04; 20 R Penfold (Edin) 41:09

W40: 2 K Kelly (Troon) 41:52; 3 K White (Gars) 42:4. **W45:** 1 R Fraser-Moodie (Spring) 44:38; 2 J Maclean (Edin) 44:46. **W50:** 1 J Menzies (PH Racing) 43:50; 2 A Chong (Giff N) 44:34. W55: 1 S Lewis (Giff N) 48:29. **W60:** 1 K Scott (Gars) 53:41. **W65:** 1 I Burnett (C'gie) 50:02; 2 E Christie (Cambus) 52:27. W70: 1 M Fleming (Pit) 58:55

TEAM: 1 Shett 153; 2 Edin 196; 3 C'thy 293; 4 Edin U 360; 5 HBT 384; 6 Cambus 466

U20 (6.8km): 1 H Ryding (Giff N) 25:09; 2 N Phillips (Dund H) 25:51; 3 H Anderson (E Kilb) 26:15; 4 I Hedley (Fife) 27:07; 5 M Padmanabhan (Gars) 27:29

TEAM: 1 Edin U 17; 2 Glas U 24; 3 Giff N 38

U17 (6.2km): 1 C Heggie (Ross C) 24:17; 2 M McClelland-Brooks (I'clyde) 24:31; 3 K Meek (I'ness) 24:47; 4 J Inglis (Law) 25:11; 5 E Dougall (Giff N) 25:20

TEAM: 1 Giff N 21; 2 Falk VH 35; 3 E Loth 59

U15 (4.3km): 1 L MacRae (I'ness) 16:13; 2 Z Redmond (Kilb) 16:16; 3 F Campbell (Giff N) 17:01; 4 A Stewart (Storn) 17:12; 5 J Taylor (Edin) 17:18

TEAM: 1 Giff N 48; 2 Edin 61; 3 Falk VH 85

U13 (3.2km): 1 C Wright (Tm E Loth) 12:40; 2 L Connell (Strathe) 12:44; 3 H Simpson (Giff N) 12:46; 4 E Caldow (Giff N) 13:12; 5 E Christie (Falk) 13:14

TEAM: 1 Giff N 31; 2 Falk VH 92; 3 E Loth 120

WELSH NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS, Brecon, February 26

Men (10.35km): 1 D Griffiths (Swan) 31:39; 2 T Wood (Eryri) 31:54; 3 D Nash (Card) 32:00; 4 M Edwards (Card) 32:11; 5 D Rothwell (Swan, M35) 32:14; 6 A Bull (P'pridd R) 32:39; 7 R Axe (Card, M120) 32:46; 8 M Rees (Swan, M35) 33:17; 9 T Foster (G&G) 33:22; 10 M James (Swan) 33:24; 11 N Williams (Vale R) 33:29; 12 B Mitchell (Swan) 33:31; 13 J Turner (Swan) 33:45; 14 D Bodman (Parc BB) 33:49; 15 A Jackson (Card) 33:55

M40: 1 B McWhirter (Swan) 34:05; 2 R Matthews (Parc BB) 34:25; 3 J Thie (Card) 34:33. M45: 1 R Woods (Builth) 35:10. M50: 1 H Evans (Parc BB) 35:00. M55: 1 J Wherlock (Llis) 36:41. M60: 1 D Warren (Cardig) 40:25

TEAM: 1 Swansea 49; 2 Cardiff 107; 3 Pontypridd 158

U20 (6.89km): 1 D Jones (Carm) 20:28; 2 L Sheppard-Brown (Card) 20:36; 3 A Barber (Harb) 20:47

U17 (5.22km): 1 J Rees Gara (Wig D) 15:59; 2 I Thomas (Carm) 16:08; 3 H Evans (Newp) 16:33

TEAM: 1 Carmarthen 32; 2 Maldwyn 38; 3 Brecon 60

U15 (4.33km): 1 J Sanders (Card) 13:53; 2 O Kearney (Welsh Anglo) 13:56; 3 G Tough (A'dare) 14:01

TEAM: 1 Cardiff 29; 2 Newport 71; 3 Cardiff B 85

U13 (3.25km): 1 F Burns (Card) 10:21; 2 T Garrod (Newp) 10:26; 3 A Evans (Dees) 10:27

TEAM: 1 Deeside 23; 2 Cardiff 48; 3 Swansea 83

U11 (1.56km): 1 L Durston (B'end) 5:16; 2 T Davies (Carm) 5:18; 3 O Phillips (Card) 5:21

Women (6.89km): 1 O Tsim (P'pridd R) 23:55; 2 L Marland (Les C, W35) 24:01; 3 M Owen (Dees) 24:33; 4 G Tutton (Swan) 24:49; 5 D Morris (Builth, W35) 25:07; 6 A Dumayne (Llis) 25:09; 7 L Jones (Les C, W40) 25:17; 8 L Marlow (Read) 25:28; 9 K Matthews (Chep, W45) 25:46; 10 C Powell (Newp) 26:01; 11 K Hinshelwood (Parc BB) 26:03; 12 L Flynn (Les C, W35) 26:12; 13 K Beecher (Les C, W40) 26:18; 14 E Baxter (G'nock) 26:21; 15 G Parnell (Newp, W40) 26:22

W45: 2 S Bell (Chep) 26:54; 3 W Price (Amman) 27:14. **W50:** 1 S Chipper (Llis) 26:50; 2 T Jenkins (Porth) 27:07; 3 N Jukes (Parc BB) 27:10. W55: 1 N Morgan (Chep) 28:19. W60: 1 S Phillips (Swan) 33:44. **W65:** 1 E Arwyn (Les C) 39:06

TEAM: 1 Les C 36; 2 Swansea 80; 3 Builth 104

U20 (5.22km): 1 B Bown (Menai, U17) 18:48; 2 G Goode (Card) 19:08; 3 C Jones (A'dare, U17) 19:19; 4 E Bailey (Win, U17) 19:29; 5 C Griffiths (Newp, U17) 19:37

TEAM: 1 Aberavon 64

U15 (4.33km): 1 G Millie (Card) 14:56; 2 A Doherty (Dees) 15:04; 3 H Humphreys (Swan) 15:16

TEAM: 1 Cardiff 28; 2 Swansea 33; 3 Deeside 76

U13 (3.25km): 1 B Boyce (Card) 11:07; 2 H Watson (Dees) 11:12; 3 N Griffiths (Carm) 11:48

TEAM: 1 Cardiff 28; 2 Swansea 33; 3 Deeside 76

U11 (1.56km): 1 D Jones (Dees) 5:48; 2 M Phillips (Taf Running & Orienteering Team) 5:50; 3 T Curtis (P'broke) 5:53

TRACK & FIELD

ENGLAND ATHLETICS U20/U17 & U15 CHAMPIONSHIPS, Sheffield, February 11-12

U20 men: 60: 1 M Odamtten (WG&EL) 6.67; 2 R Thomas-Riley (Cov) 6.77; 3 S Anyaogu (BFTTA) 6.78. SF2: 1 Odamtten 6.67. **200:** 1 D Patterson (Glas Sc Sp) 21.35; 2 F Arkell (HW) 21.71; 3 B Cronin (Walton) 21.72. **SF1:** 1 M Sinclair (E&H) 21.62. **400:** 1 O Okoh (Chelm) 48.15; 2 T Hockley (Harrow) 48.51; 3 M Dobrescu (BFTTA) 48.73. **SF1:** 1 O Okoh (Chelm) 48.07; 2 M Dobrescu (BFTTA) 48.13. **Ht2:** 1 M Dobrescu (BFTTA) 48.23. **800:** 1 D Race (Gate) 1:53.11; 2 J Minshull (Cov) 1:53.89; 3 C Mcleod (Pit) 1:55.43. **60H:** 1 D Goriola (Bexley) 7.72; 2 N Hanson (NEB) 7.77; 3 R Hedman (SB) 7.90. **Ht2:** 1 J Dean (Norw) 7.74; 2 Goriola 7.77. **HJ:** 1 M Williams (Leeds C) 2.05; 2 L Ball (Yate) 2.05; 3 K Jack (SB) 2.05. **PV:** 1 W Lane (Shef/Dearn) 4.86; 2 A Bowling (PNV) 4.35; 3 K Afirifah-Mensah (Notts) 4.35. **LJ:** 1 O Adepegba (NEB) 7.22; 2 W Reid (York) 6.78; 3 A Sharif (Sutt) 6.70. **TJ:** 1 A Fadeel 14.76; 2 D Akinradewo (Traff) 14.73; 3 S Sinclair (Prest) 14.44. **SP:** 1 I Delaney (Prest) 17.43; 2 D Pawlett (P'broke) 16.65; 3 C Unsworth (Traff) 15.82

U17: 200: 1 J Berry (Newp) 21.72; 2 A Tugwell (Card Arch) 21.83; 3 T Bristol (Bir) 22.45. **SF1:** 1 C Kelly (HW) 22.25; 2 Bristol 22.32. **SF2:** 1 Tugwell 22.05; 2 M Ritson (B&W) 22.44. **SF3:** 1 Berry 22.17; 2 E Nwokeji (SB) 22.39. **400:** 1 Z Jones (SB) 49.88; 2 J Stone (Ton) 50.56; 3 R Stovell (Hallam) 50.74. **Ht3:** 1 Stovell 50.64. **800:** 1 T Waterworth (Hunts) 1:57.27; 2 J Kinrade (Shrews) 1:57.57; 3 K Sriskandarajah (Herne H) 1:57.88. Ht2: 1 Sriskandarajah 1:57.19. **1500:** 1 A Collier (WSEH) 3:58.44; 2 O Patton

For our full, up to date results service from across athletics, don't

(Kilb) 4:02.00. **60H:** 1 C West (M&M) 8.23; 2 A Salaam (Have) 8.26; 3 A Dingley (Ply) 8.31. Ht2: 1 J Taylor (Torb) 8.28. **Ht3:** 1 Dingley 8.15. **HJ:** 1 S Wright (Chelm) 1.94; 2 R Corrin (Manx) 1.91; 3 J Holmes (Shef/Dearn) 1.91. **PV:** 1 R May (Shef/Dearn) 4.10; 2 T Walker (Dartf) 3.80; 3 A Brown (SB) 3.70. **LJ:** 1 S Wright (Chelm) 7.17; 2 D Varlack (Mil K) 7.13; 3 J Stone (Ton) 6.65. **TJ:** 1 E Nwachokor (Bas) 13.86; 2 D Ayodele (Mil K) 13.70; 3 S Mbimu-Kiambi (Card) 13.35. **SP:** 1 D Alade (Dartf) 15.80; 2 G Leite (N Som) 15.36; 3 S Hatch (Dartf) 15.36

U15: 60: 1 F Fabusiwa (Croy) 7.08; 2 M Evans (Maldwyn) 7.13; 3 V Redman (Folk) 7.18; 4 D Iheme (Rad) 7.19. **200:** 1 M Evans (Maldwyn) 22.43; 2 D Iheme (Rad) 23.40; 3 V Redman (Folk) 23.69. **Ht1:** 1 Fabusiwa 23.15. **300:** 1 T Niewczasinski-Kirkland (WG&EL) 37.24; 2 D Wood (Bir) 37.81. **800:** 1 C Dick (Giff N) 2:02.24; 2 A Virgilio (Swin) 2:04.06. **60H:** 1 H Nmaju (Central P) 8.55; 2 J Vural (R&N) 8.95; 3 E Olaleye (Camb H) 9.00. **HJ:** 1 C Penney (IRL) 1.96; 2 C McQue (Sun) 1.72. **PV:** 1 C Platt (B&B) 3.80; 2 C Park (Sale) 3.10; 3 P Wiley (Sale) 2.70. **LJ:** 1 H Nmaju (Central P) 6.24; 2 Z Blake (Herne H) 5.95. **SP:** 1 L Capes (PNV) 15.81; 2 O Coulibaly (Soton) 13.89

U20 women: 60: 1 J Eze (Gate) 7.31; 2 R Regis (BFTTA) 7.41; 3 M Angelo (Leeds C) 7.46;. SF2: 1 Regis 7.39. **200:** 1 S Eduan (Sale) 23.54; 2 S Walton (Horw) 23.77; 3 G Datey (WG&EL) 24.69. **400:** 1 A Nemits (Wig D) 54.17; 2 E Sisson (Charn) 55.36; 3 J Astill (SNH) 55.42. **800:** 1 I King (Wig D) 2:10.07; 2 I Downes (Shrews) 2:10.16; 3 A Lloyd (Wig D) 2:10.19. **1500:** 1 A Stratton (B'burn) 4:31.28; 2 E Brooks (Linc W) 4:38.65. **60H:** 1 M Corker (Liv H) 8.47; 2 J Duncton (Bir) 8.53; 3 L Bonsu (Croy) 8.59. **Ht1:** 1 Corker 8.47. Ht3: 1 Bonsu 8.57. **HJ:** 1 G Garber (Leeds C) 1.75; 2 H Ferguson (Traff) 1.72; 3 L Scott-Rule (Soton) 1.68. **PV:** 1 C O'Neill (Bir) 3.70; 2 E Oakden (Lewes) 3.60; 3 L White (Ton) 3.50. **LJ:** 1 L Fellows (WSEH) 5.90; 2 J Lee (Carm) 5.87; 3 S Rodgers (Taun) 5.72. **TJ:** 1 A Gray (And) 12.32; 2 L White (Ayr S) 12.29; 3 M Yalekhue (Amber) 12.18; 4 A Warre (WSEH) 12.18. **SP:** 1 C Agyepong (B&B) 14.10; 2 A Amadin (Sale) 12.83; 3 T Stoddart (Tel) 12.77

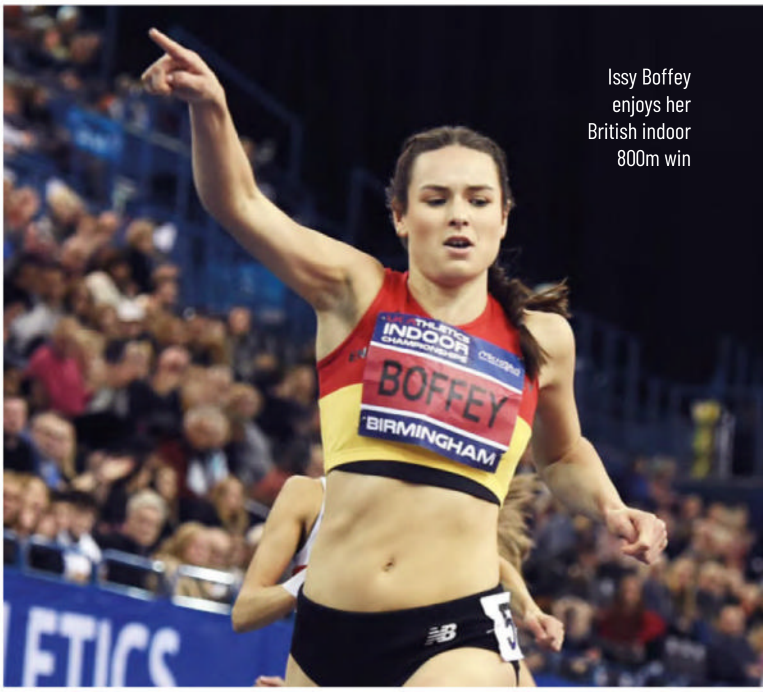
U17: 60: 1 O Akande (Linc W) 7.41; 2 N Desir (Card Arch) 7.52; 3 L Bradley (Norw) 7.55. **SF2:** 1 Bradley 7.53. **200:** 1 C Downey (BFTTA) 24.16; 2 N Desir (Card Arch) 24.80; 3 H Medlen (Ton) 25.28. SF1: 1 A Freeman (K&S) 25.21. **SF3:** 1 Downey 24.87; 2 Medlen 25.23. 300: 1 K Dacosta (B'burn) 39.35; 2 S Barrett (R&N) 39.68; 3 M Paitoo (Lon Hth) 40.94; 4 I Smith (N'pton) 40.96. **SF1:** 1 K Dacosta (B'burn) 39.39. **800:** 1 C McCloy (Roth) 2:08.79; 2 A Gisbourne (Bury) 2:09.17; 3 L Unwin (Reig) 2:10.87. **1500:** 1 L Langan (York) 4:37.35; 2 M McClelland-Brooks (I'clyde) 4:37.77; 3 F Murdoch (Stock H) 4:41.01. **60H:** 1 T Brown (Sale) 8.39; 2 I Mardle (Norw) 8.71; 3 L Noble (Dees) 8.79. **SF2:** 1 R Wright (WG&EL) 8.77. **Ht2:** 1 Noble (Dees) 8.73. **Ht3:** 1 K Jones (Kend) 8.73. **HJ:** 1 M Judd (Win) 1.71; 2 Q Ukpai (B&B) 1.68; 3 E Marshall (KuH) 1.65; 4 L Byrne (S'port W) 1.65; 5 M Scales (HW) 1.65; 6 M Secker (Ton) 1.65. **PV:** 1 I Turner (Dac) 3.25; 2 A Edwards (SB) 3.10; 3 L Jervis-Allan (WSEH) 3.10. **LJ:** 1 T Brown (Sale) 5.94; 2 S Parker (Blyth) 5.71; 3 D Snell (B&B) 5.64. **TJ:** 1 Q Ukpai (B&B) 11.79; 2 A Brown (Traff) 11.54; 3 A Hewitt (Wig D) 11.31. **SP:** 1 E Bostock (Dac) 12.91; 2 R Wright (WG&EL) 12.61; 3 L Thompson (Gate) 12.34

U15: 60: 1 A Afolabi (Card Arch) 7.64; 2 E Cadman (Camb H) 7.67; 3 A McLeod (SB) 7.73. **200:** 1 Afolabi 24.64; 2 Cadman 24.93; 3 I Davies (Bir) 25.03. **SF2:** 1 Cadman 24.81; 2 Davies 24.94. **300:** 1 S Omotosho (Bas) 40.35; 2 L Bertacchini (Win) 41.28; 3 B Rennocks (Notts) 42.22. **Ht1:** 1 Omotosho 40.24. **800:** 1 L Roden (Roth) 2:14.52; 2 R Phillips (W Ches) 2:16.62; 3 D Allford (BMH) 2:17.65. **60H:** 1 H Whittaker (Elgin) 8.97; 2 M Mills (Stock H) 9.08; 3 G McCollin (R&N) 9.14. **HJ:** 1 K Laurence (Works) 1.60. **PV:** 1= P Scott (Lewes)/G James (Shef/Dearn) 2.65; 3 L Trott (Soton) 2.65. **LJ:** 1 O Schrimshaw (Dees) 5.59; 2 C Hancock (WG&EL) 5.47; 3 G Osman (Win) 5.29. **TJ:** 1 A Scott (Chelm) 11.09; 2 O Schrimshaw (Dees) 10.87; 3 J Best (B&H) 10.57. **SP:** 1 J Lamprell (Ips) 11.96; 2 M Mills (Stock H) 11.06

UK ATHLETICS INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIPS, Birmingham, February 18-19

Men: 60: 1 R Prescod (E&H) 6.54; 2 J Azu (Card) 6.57; 3 E Amo-Dadzie (WG&EL) 6.61; 4 A Robertson (Sale) 6.62; 5 O Bromby (Soton) 6.62. **200:** 1 R Akinyebo (BFTTA) 21.10; 2 S Baffour (Cov) 21.16; 3 D Kinlock (Croy) 21.46; 4 D Patterson (Glas Sc Sp, U20) 21.78. **SF1:** 1 Akinyebo 21.23; 2 Patterson (U20) 21.53. **400:** 1 S Reardon (B&B) 46.96; 2 B Higgins (Shef/Dearn) 47.07; 3 L Thompson (Shef/Dearn) 47.14. **SF1:** 1 L Davey (NEB) 46.69; 2 Higgins 46.79; 3 Reardon 46.83. **SF3:** 1 A Haydock-Wilson (WSEH) 46.96. **800:** 1 G Learmonth (Lass) 1:47.43; 2 B Claridge (Abing) 1:48.06; 3 J McMurray (St Alb) 1:49.42. **Ht1:** 1 Learmonth 1:48.69. **1500:** 1 N Gourley (Giff N) 3:41.20; 2 G Mills (Phoe) 3:42.87; 3 B Moore (WSEH) 3:47.74. **3000:** 1 J West (Ton) 7:49.78; 2 O Perrin (Menai) 7:50.86; 3 C Wheeler (MKDP) 7:51.80; 4 H McLuckie (SB) 7:55.82. **60H:** 1 D King (Ply) 7.62; 2 A Pozzi (Strat) 7.81; 3 C Fillery (WG&EL) 7.93. Ht4: 1 King 7.65; 2 Pozzi 7.80. **3000W:** 1 C Wilkinson (E&H) 11:00.98; 2 C Snook (AFD) 11:57.16; 3 L Legon (Bexley) 12:44.21. **HJ:** 1 W Grimsey (WG&EL) 2.16; 2 D Duruaku (Harrow) 2.12; 3 A Coward (SB) 2.12. **PV:** 1 C Myers (Birt) 5.05; 2 E Bradley (W Ches) 4.90; 2 R Nairne (Jag) 4.90. **LJ:** 1 R Banigo (Sale) 7.85; 2 J Roach (Harrow) 7.53; 3 S Khogali (WG&EL) 7.45. **SP:** 1 S Lincoln (York) 20.36; 2 Y Zatat (WG&EL) 18.47; 3 P Swan (Corn) 17.39

Women: 60: 1 D Neita (Camb H) 7.17; 2 A Philip (NEB) 7.21; 3 A Rees (Edin) 7.30; 4 J Eze (Gate, U20) 7.31; 5 B Williams (E&H) 7.34. **SF1:** 1 Neita 7.18; 2 B Williams (E&H) 7.31. SF3: 1 Philip 7.25; 2 Rees 7.28. **Ht6:** 1 Rees 7.28. **200:** 1 S Eduan (Sale, U20) 23.49; 2 H Brier (Swan) 23.60; 3 H Williams (Herts P) 23.77; 4 S Walton (Horw, U20) 23.94. **SF1:** 1 Williams 23.60; 2 H Longden (Card) 23.660. **SF2:** 1 Brier 23.56; 2 Eduan 23.58; 3 Walton 23.71. **400:** 1 A Pipi (E&H) 52.52; 2 L Nielsen (E&H) 52.90; 3 C McAulay (Traff) 52.98. **800:** 1 I Boffey (E&H) 2:03.27; 2 J Selman (Fife) 2:03.68; 3 A Ives (Bas, U20) 2:03.97. **1500:** 1 E Baker (SB) 4:06.73; 2 K Snowden (Herne H) 4:06.98; 3 E Wallace (Giff N) 4:09.22. **3000:** 1 M Courtney-Bryant (Poole) 8:50.76; 2 H Nuttall (Charn) 8:50.85; 3 E Walker (Edin) 9:00.53; 4 A Markovc (Wake) 9:00.87; 5 I Fry (Newb) 9:01.13. **60H:** 1 C Sember (WG&EL) 8.10; 2 M Jessop (SB) 8.26; 3 A Barrett (Traff) 8.32; 4 M McIntosh (Harrow, U20) 8.36. **Ht2:** 1 Sember 8.25. Ht4: 1 Barrett 8.32; 2 McIntosh 8.34. **3000W:** 1 A Jennings (AFD) 14:16.37; 2 E Kelly (Nthn (IOM)) 14:28.88; 3 G Griffiths (P'broke, U20) 14:34.12. **HJ:** 1 M Lake (WSEH) 1.90; 2 L Zialor (Mil K) 1.87; 3 K Anson (Liv H) 1.84. **PV:** 1 J Ive (Sutt) 4.35; 2 S Cook (Hale) 4.25; 3 J Spencer-Smith (Harrow) 4.15. **LJ:** 1 J Sawyers (Stoke) 6.73; 2 L Hadaway (York) 6.56; 3 J Smith (WSEH) 6.16. **TJ:** 1 M Elcock (WG&EL) 12.71; 2 L Hulland (TVH) 12.71; 3 M Jackson (TVH) 12.46. **SP:** 1 S McKinna (Gt Yar) 17.20; 2 A Strickler (TVH) 17.01; 3 S Vincent (Ports) 16.76



Issy Boffey enjoys her British indoor 800m win

BIRMINGHAM WORLD INDOOR TOUR FINAL 2023, Birmingham, February 25

There were British records for Neil Gourley at 1500m (3:32.48), Keely Hodgkinson at 800m (1:57.18) and Dina Asher-Smith at 60m (7.03).

Men: 60: A: 1 C Dobson (Col H) 6.64; 2 A Gemili (B&B) 6.68; 3 S Gordon (Card) 6.70. **400:** 1 J Richards (TTO) 45.74; 2 V Norwood (USA) 45.92; 3 J Raftery (IRL) 46.66; 4 B Higgins (Shef/Dearn) 46.66; 5 G Nielsen (DEN) 46.87; 6 S Reardon (B&B) 47.02. **1500:** 1 N Gourley (Giff N) 3:32.48; 2 (ESP) 3:33.28; 3 A Coscoran (IRL) 3:33.49; 4 L Mccann (IRL) 3:34.76; 5 J Kerr (Edin) 3:34.93; 6 O Meslek (Leeds C) 3:37.50; 7 N Griggs (Mid U, U20) 3:39.94; 8 P Copeland (P'pridd R) 3:40.64. **60H:** 1 G Holloway (USA) 7.35; 2 D Roberts (USA) 7.47; 3 R Iribarne (CUB) 7.58; 4 M Dickson (USA) 7.60; 5 F Crittenden (USA) 7.61; 6 D King (Ply) 7.70; 7 D Czykier (POL) 7.80; 8 A Pozzi (Strat) 7.80. **HJ:** 1 H Kerr (NZL) 2.28; 2 E Portillo (MEX) 2.28; 3 E Rivera (MEX) 2.25; 4 T Potye (GER) 2.25; 5 M Fassinotti (ITA) 2.22; 5 N Kobielski (POL) 2.22; 7 T Carmoy (BEL) 2.18; 8 W Grimsey (WG&EL) 2.14. LJ: 1 M Dendy (USA) 8.28; 2 T Gayle (JAM) 8.13; 3 W Williams (USA) 8.03; 4 E Konate (FRA) 7.82; 5 R Banigo (Sale) 7.81; 6 T Montler (SWE) 7.63; 7 J Roach (Harrow) 7.60

Women: 60: 1 D Asher-Smith (B&B) 7.05; 2 D Neita (Camb H) 7.13; 3 D Smith-Barnett (USA) 7.15; 4 S Jackson (JAM) 7.18; 5 N Morrison (JAM) 7.24; 6 A Strachan (BAH) 7.25; 7 G Lückenkemper (GER) 7.28; 8 A Philip (NEB) 7.30. **Ht1:** 1 D Neita (Camb H) 7.14; 2 S Jackson (JAM) 7.237. **Ht2:** 1 D Asher-Smith (B&B) 7.03; 2 D Smith-Barnett (USA) 7.19; 3 G Lückenkemper (GER) 7.27; 4 A Philip (NEB) 7.28; 5 N Morrison (JAM) 7.29; 6 B Williams (E&H) 7.37; 7 A Rees (Edin) 7.41; 8 G Hooper (Harrow) 7.44. **800:** 1 K Hodgkinson (Leigh) 1:57.18; 2 C Bisset (AUS) 1:59.83; 3 I Boffey (E&H) 2:00.25; 4 A Horvat (SLO) 2:00.62; 5 E Baker (SB) 2:00.86; 6 A Wilson (USA) 2:01.13; 7 N Yarigo (BEN, W35) 2:01.18. **1000:** 1 L Muir (Dund H) 2:34.53; 2 C Bobocea (ROU) 2:35.35; 3 S Ennaoui (POL) 2:35.69; 4 E Bellò (ITA) 2:37.09; 5 K Snowden (Herne H) 2:37.46. **3000:** 1 G Tsegay (ETH) 8:16.69; 2 M Alem (ETH) 8:31.20; 3 K Klosterhalfen (GER) 8:35.14; 4 T Gateri (KEN) 8:36.64; 5 M Akidor (KEN) 8:40.24; 6 M Galant (POL) 8:43.08; 7 (FRA, M) 8:44.47; 8 K Lukan (SLO) 8:44.80; 9 M Pen Freitas (POR) 8:47.07; 10 E Walker (Edin) 9:02.80. **PV:** 1 A Newman (CAN) 4.78; 2 T Šutej (SLO) 4.71; 3 G Leon (USA) 4.61; 4 R Bruni (ITA) 4.61; 5 A Stefanidi (GRE) 4.51; 6 B Williams (USA) 4.51; 7 W Murto (FIN) 4.51; 8 S Cook (Hale) 4.41

UK ROAD

PODIUM BREAKING 10 Challenge, Barrowford, March 5

Emile Cairess succeeded in his attempt at breaking Richard Nerurkar's British 10-mile best of 46:02, by running a time of 45:57. It was also a European best.

Men: 1 E Cairess (Leeds) 45:57; 2 H Milner (Der) 49:23; 3 K Omar (Bir) 51:02

forget to head online and visit athleticsweekly.com

A LAP WITH...

ELLIE BAKER

Katy Barden speaks to the British indoor 1500m champion whose mindset change has brought big changes

“I was standing on the start line knowing that I hadn’t worked to the best of my ability to be in the best shape at that time – and I never wanted that feeling again,” says Ellie Baker, recalling the moment her mindset shifted.

It was 2020, and the 24-year-old admits she hadn’t dealt well with lockdown. “I’m very much motivated by competition and if I don’t have any goals to aim for, then I’m like, ‘What am I training for? What is this all towards?’” she says. “I think I got a little bit lazy because I didn’t really know what was going on and I just let a few things go.

“I got so unfit over that period of time and I missed an opportunity because there *were* races, and I was quite annoyed at myself for not keeping on it.

“It was a blessing in disguise, really, because I feel like I had to go through that to make a decision. I was always there or thereabouts, but I wanted to make that next break. I was fed up with coming second or just missing out.”

Baker sat down with her brother at the end of that season and told him she wanted to make her mark. They agreed to create a plan to ensure she was on top of everything and that no stone would be left unturned. Their first aim was to get selected for the 2021 European Athletics Indoor Championships, where she finished fourth in the 800m.

“It was a massive mindset change more than anything,” says the Shaftesbury Barnet athlete. “Since that day I’ve given absolutely everything.”

Weekly accountability meetings kept Baker in check and her times got quicker. In 2021 she made a breakthrough, going sub-two minutes for the first time over 800m (1:59.54) and taking over eight seconds off her 1500m best (4:06.54). In 2022 she went even faster, running 1:59.52 and 4:04.90. In addition, she finished eighth in the final of the European Championships 1500m and reached the semi-finals of the World Athletics Championships over 800m.

That she performed so well in 2022 is credit to her hard work after an injury put paid to the previous winter’s training. This winter has been uninterrupted and everything clicked with 1500m gold at the UK Athletics Indoor Championships in a championship record (4:06.73).

Her 11th-place finish in the 1500m final at the European Indoor Championships left Baker disappointed, but she went with the pace and believed she could win a medal.

In a memorable era for British middle-distance running, Baker is in the fortunate position that she can turn her hand to the 800m and the 1500m.

“My coach [Jon Bigg] very much wants me to do both,” she says. “He thinks I can be a very good 1500m runner. My endurance comes quite naturally to me, but I’ve also got natural speed.

“I preferred the speedier stuff growing up and I’ve done a little bit more of that, but when we’ve done longer sessions I’ve actually fared quite well. We hadn’t done many sessions to run that time (4:04.90) last summer, so he was excited by that, especially when I’d had the winter injured.

“I think that they go hand in hand, and if you’re going to run a solid 1500m you’re going to run a solid 800m, and vice versa. With the middle distance being so stacked in Britain at the minute, if you can give yourself as much opportunity as possible, then that’s a smart move.”

Two years on from her first accountability meeting, Baker has no regrets.

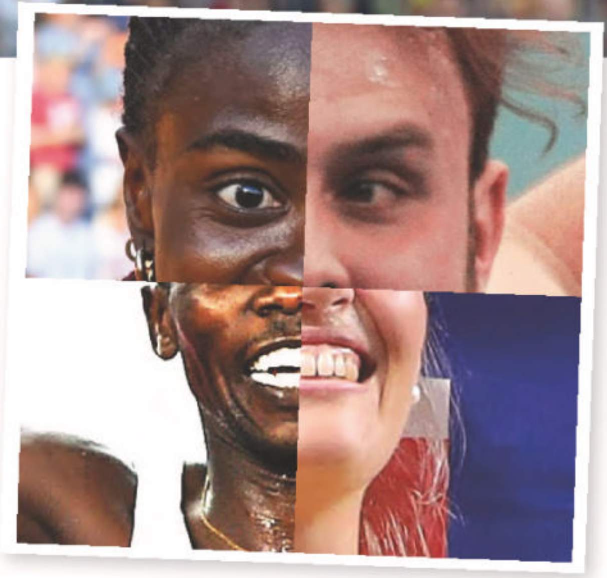
“I’ve had to stay resilient and do it my way,” she says of her career to date. “Lockdown gave me the kick I needed. Now I will always be able to stand on the start line and know that I’ve put everything into it and whatever happens, happens, because I’ve got confidence in the work I’ve put in.”

Q. If you could choose one person to train/compete with, past or present, who would it be and why?

A. Kelly Holmes did the 800m and 1500m so that would be really cool, but Seb Coe and Steve Ovett’s training would have been really cool to see, too. I feel like they did such different things but both had success. They’re the people I look up to because they’re the people who have done what I’m trying to do in the two events, so they’re the ones who’d inspire me.

STARTER FOR 10

MUNICH 2022
I RUN CLEAN
LAKE
SPAR
GREAT



① In which event did Keely Hodgkinson set a world indoor best in February?

② Which two athletes will be leading the British charge at this April's London Marathon?

③ Budapest will host the 2023 World Athletics Championships but how many Hungarian athletes took part at the 2022 edition in Eugene?

④ Which event will kick off the 2023 World Athletics Championships in Budapest on the August 19?

⑤ Who was quoted by *AW* saying this in January: "You feel that you're part of something really special and that is great. But then there is that stark comparison when you come home and you have nothing. And that is difficult for athletes."

⑥ What height did Morgan Lake clear in the high jump to set a British record in February? And who held the previous record?

⑦ Who are these four faces?

⑧ What is the length of the crossbar in high jump?

⑨ How many times has France staged the summer Olympics (not including the upcoming 2024 Games) and in which years?

⑩ Where and when is the 2023 Commonwealth Youth Games to be held?

Answers in the April issue of *AW*

MARCH ANSWERS: ① Maria Mutola ran 2:30.94 in Stockholm on Feb 25, 1999; ② Oxford and Cambridge in England in 1864; ③ Not winning a medal in any track race longer than 800m, excluding the marathon; ④ Riga, Latvia. Mile, 5km and half marathon; ⑤ Botswana, Grenada and Melbourne; ⑥ Dame Denise Lewis; ⑦ Four faces: Jereem Richards (Trinadad and Tobago) 400m, Auriol Dongmo (Portugal) Shot Put, Mariano García (Spain) 800m, Yaroslava Mahuchikh (Ukraine); ⑧ Melissa Courtney-Bryant in a time of 15:31; ⑨ Sanya Richards-Ross; ⑩ Start at Hôtel de Ville and finish at Les Invalides

AW LETTERS

HAVE YOUR SAY

GET IN TOUCH:
Email us at
haveyoursay@athleticsweekly.com
or via our social
media channels

NUTTALL
BIRMINGHAM
COURTNEY BRYANT
BIRMINGHAM
BRITISH ATHLETICS
SEIKO

Dedicated follower of passion

It is with great sadness that I will have to cancel my father's subscription to *AW*. He had been a subscriber for at least 70 years.

Clifford Roffey was born in Christchurch in 1932. He did his national service as a young man and upon his discharge in 1953 he was described as a "good cross-country runner". This statement recognised an aptitude within him for what was to become a lifelong passion for running and athletics.

Dad's running career continued after the army. He worked in London and was training when Roger Bannister broke the four-minute mile on May 6, 1954.

Over his lifetime he entered many races, including marathons, and a magazine article he kept reports that he ran a marathon aged 51. He was the oldest entrant in the race.

As I say, Dad subscribed to *Athletics Weekly* for around 70 years and even though he lived in Kenya for over 30 years he had the magazine shipped out to him. Throughout his life he religiously followed the careers of British athletes in events screened onto his television from around the world. Brendan Foster's voice was almost as familiar to me as my own father's!

My dad's passion for athletics remained undimmed even in his 91st year but very sadly he passed away in January. One of the saddest things I have to do is to cancel his *AW* subscription because it was such a huge part of his life for so long. It occurs to me that he may well have been one of the magazine's oldest and longest subscribers.

It would delight and tickle him if you were to publish this letter in the magazine.

Sarah Bowers

Hard work pays off

I know I won't be alone in my delight for Jazmin Sawyers winning the European indoor long jump title. After knocking on the door for so long, it was wonderful to see her moving on to a new level in Istanbul. It spoke volumes for her perseverance. One other British athlete who has shown similar fortitude flew more under the radar, however. Melissa Courtney-Bryant watched the last edition of the European Indoors in a boot and on crutches during the midst of some major injury problems. It was also fantastic to see her win the British indoor title, take a European 3000m bronze and get some reward for the huge amount of work it has taken to get back on track.

Simon Davy

A championship challenge

The World Cross Country Championships showed us that a little creative thinking can go a long way in athletics. The carefully engineered course might still have been a world away from the traditional tests which are seen in Britain but it made for some amazing races and clearly tested the athletes to their limits.

Jane Taylor

WHAT'S ON

MARCH 17
- Battersea Park 5km Under the Lights
  fridaynightunderthelights5k.co.uk

- Jerusalem Marathon
  jerusalem-marathon.com

MARCH 18
- English Schools Athletics Association Cross Country Championships
  Wollaton Park, Nottingham
  esaa.org.uk

MARCH 19
- Rome Marathon
  runromethemarathon.com

- OPAP Limassol Marathon GSO
  limassolmarathon.com

- United Airlines NYC Half Marathon
  nyrr.org

- Seoul Marathon
  seoul-marathon.com

- Zurich Marato Barcelona
  zurichmaratobarcelona.es

- South American Marathon Championships
  Korou
  zurichmaratobarcelona.es

MARCH 25
- SIAB Cross Country International
  Sefton Park, Liverpool
  esaa.org.uk

- Brisbane Track Classic
  athletics.com.au

- MVP Velocity Test
  Kingston
  world-track.org

- Dudinska 50
  Dudince
  worldathletics.org

MARCH 26
- BTR Liverpool Liverpool Skyline 10-Miler and Half Marathon
  btrliverpool.com

MARCH 26 - APRIL 1
- World Masters Indoor Championships
  world-masters-athletics.com

MARCH 30 - APRIL 2
- Australian Championships
  Queensland
  athletics.com.au

APRIL 1
- Prague Half Marathon
  runczech.com

APRIL 2
- Schneider Electric Marathon de Paris
  schneiderelectricparismarathon.com

- Brighton Marathon
  brightonmarathonweekend.co.uk

- ABP Southampton Marathon
  southamptonmarathon.co.uk

- Anglo Celtic Plate, Craigavon

- London Landmarks Half Marathon
  llhm.co.uk

- Tom Scott 10-mile, Motherwell
  tomscottroadraces.com

APRIL 7-10
- EY Guernsey Running Festival
  guernseyathletics.org.gg
- Isle of Man Festival of Running
  easterfestival.info

APRIL 8-10
- CARIFTA Games
  carifta50.com

For all the latest athletics news and updates, visit **athleticsweekly.com**

EILISH SEARCHES HIGH AND LOW FOR SUCCESS

SCOTLAND
MCCOLGAN
LONGINES

Eilish McColgan traditionally does most of her training alone, with only her partner Michael Rimmer alongside her on a bicycle. But, in the run-up to the London Marathon, she is likely to be joined occasionally by 6ft 5in tall 800m runner Thomas Staines.

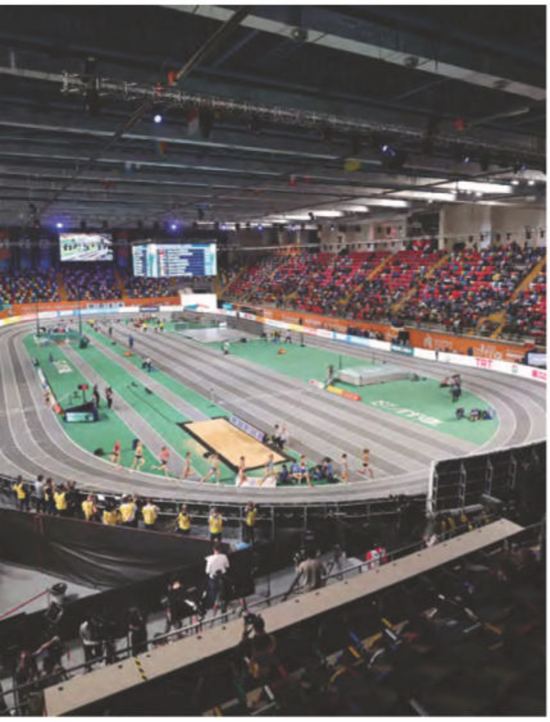
The reason is that McColgan has been based lately at altitude in Colorado at the home of 1988 Olympians Linda and Gary Staines. As many athletics fans will know, Linda ran 50.98 for 400m under her maiden name of Keough, while Gary won 5000m silver at the 1990 European Championships.

Their son Thomas, meanwhile, has an 800m best of 1:45.28 set last year.

McColgan broke Paula Radcliffe's UK 10,000m record earlier this month with 30:00.86 in California and she did it after several weeks of averaging 80-85 miles per week, which is around 20 miles per week more than usual.

On her marathon debut in London next month her goal is to beat her mother Liz's best of 2:26:52 and Steph Twell's Scottish record of 2:26:40.

First of all, though, McColgan's next race is the United Airlines NYC Half on March 19 where she is joined by fellow Brits Jess Warner-Judd, Chris Thompson and Andy Butchart.



PURR-FECT SURROUNDINGS IN ISTANBUL

Stray cats roamed around the Ataköy Athletics Arena during the European Indoor Championships but the host city of Istanbul has a habit of having its track and field action interrupted by feline invaders.

At the Balkan junior championships there in 2020, for example, a stray cat ran in front of the 100m sprinters as they were approaching the finish line and a video of the action went viral.

None of this is surprising if you consider Istanbul has a huge population of feral cats numbering in the tens, or maybe even hundreds, of thousands.

JAZ'S EARLY CLASH WITH KJT

European indoor long jump champion Jazmin Sawyers is known for her multi-talents as a singer on The Voice and bobsleigh international. In athletics one of her earliest successes saw her finish runner-up to Katarina Johnson-Thompson – the future world heptathlon champion – in the high jump at the English Schools Champs.

Sawyers then won an English Schools long jump gold 12 months later.

ITALIAN MYSTERY MAN

Samuele Ceccarelli has seemingly come from nowhere this winter to beat fellow Italian and Olympic 100m champion Marcell Jacobs to the European indoor 60m title.

Ceccarelli's PBs for 100m and 200m are a modest 10.45 and 21.60 and he has improved his 60m best this year from 6.72 to 6.47.

The 23-year-old says he only started taking athletics seriously aged 16, though, after previously focusing on karate. He has also taken his law studies more seriously than his sprint training up until now.

Talent runs in the family, though. His grandfather Gastone Gianinti was a goalkeeper for Foggia in Serie A in the 1970s.

ITALIA
CECCARELLI
I RUN CLEAN
ISTANBUL 2023

If you have a potential Dip Finish story, email: **jason.henderson@athleticsweekly.com**

Beet It®
REGEN

BOOST YOUR RECOVERY

Beet It are taking exercise recovery to the next level with the launch of the Regen Cherry+ shot. The shot combines antioxidants from sour cherry juice (prunus cerasus) concentrate (58%) and beetroot juice concentrate (42%).

Unlike other sour cherry juice products, Regen Cherry+ does not need to be diluted with water, making it a convenient and novel recovery shot. It contains no preservatives, flavourings, or additives of any kind. The shots are Informed Sport certified, are gluten free and vegan.

According to the International Olympic Committee, sour cherry juice concentrate, when dosed as 30ml of concentrate for 2-3 days after exercise, has been shown to have anti-inflammatory effects, including reduced symptoms of, or enhanced recovery from, muscle damaging exercise (ie., delayed onset muscle soreness).

Jonathan Cartwright, Beet It Brand Manager commented: "Sour cherry juice has long been known to be an effective recovery aid and there is now evidence that suggest beetroot juice may hold similar effects through its phytochemicals, such as betaine – it's the exciting plus factor of our Regen Cherry+ shot!"

The launch of Regen Cherry+ follows the success of their better known, multi-award-winning, Beet It Sport range of concentrated beetroot juice products which are widely recognised as the 'gold standard' natural nitrate brand among research teams and athletes – supplying more than 300 universities and 150 professional sports teams around the world.

The new Beet It Regen Cherry+ shot brings Beet It into the exercise recovery space and continues their mission to provide athletes with all-natural, evidence-based products.

CONCENTRATED
SOUR CHERRY AND
BEETROOT SHOT
Beet It®
REGEN
INFORMED SPORT
CHERRY+

NEW

www.beet-it.com | info@beet-it.com | 01473 890111

BeetItSport | beetitsport | @BeetItSport

FUELED BY
NITRO
ForeverRun
Guidance and cushioning for everyday running
NITRO
START FITNESS
EXPLORE ALL PUMA FOOTWEAR ONLINE